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Ben Elton woos the popcorn punters

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Inquiry urged on Treasury 'profits over euro'

By JANET BUSH AND PHILIP WEBSTER

THE Conservatives suggested last night that the Treasury may have profited from the confusion over its stance on a European single currency — and demanded an official investigation.

Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, has called for City regulators to examine allegedly unusual movements in the markets ahead of recent conflicting press reports on government policy.

In letters to Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, and to the Securities and Investments Board, he says: "Until this whole episode is laid bare, no-one investing in London's financial markets can be confident that the value of their assets is not subject to political manipulation."

The Government, he adds, should be subject to the same rules about issuing misleading information and creating false markets as private firms.

Mr Lilley has asked regulators to focus on two particular episodes: September 25, the day before the Financial Times reported that ministers were warning towards early entry into the single currency; and last Friday, the day before the Times ran an interview with Gordon Brown signalling that Britain would not join for at least five years.

The first report sent share and bond prices soaring, and sterling tumbling, while confusion after the second saw a sharp fall in prices and a large rise in the pound.

Mr Lilley has provided charts showing sharp movements in the pound before the press reports were published, suggesting that some financial market players may have had enough knowledge of their contents to make a lot of

money before the rest of the market was able to react.

City suspicions had also been aroused by unusual trading in the foreign exchange and government bond markets. One leading investment bank is planning to complain to the Treasury and the Bank about what it alleges has been unusual trading in the gilt market ahead of news stories on EMU.

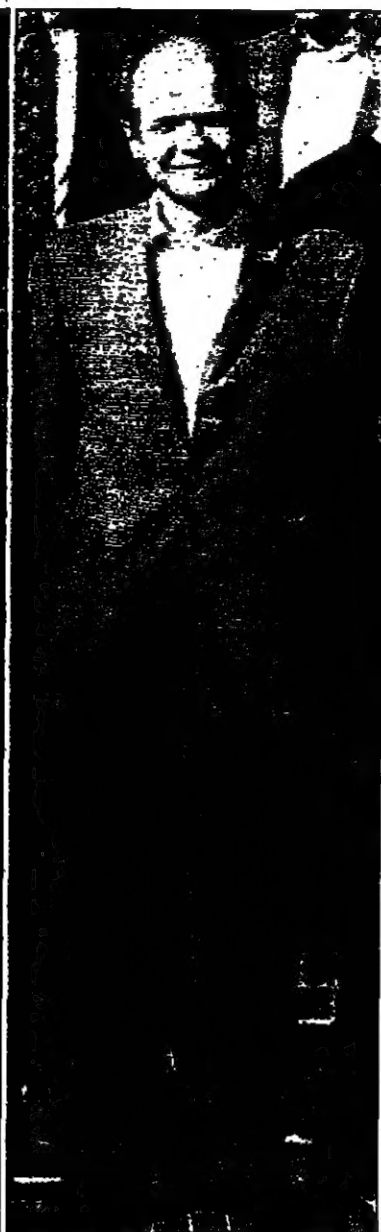
Mr Lilley yesterday highlighted two sources of concern. He criticised the Government for failing for three weeks to repudiate the Financial Times story — and indeed endorsing its contents in a number of statements by ministers — and therefore creating a "false market". The Treasury may have sold government bonds at prices that benefited from the story, he wrote, adding: "Anyone else who did this would be committing a very serious offence."

"If any private individual issued conflicting stories and profited in the meantime they would certainly face investigation. It is even more important for establishing who is responsible for conflicting stories which may have benefited government and disadvantaged private firms and individuals."

The Bank of England last night said that it would seriously consider the contents of the letter. The Treasury also said it was considering points made by Mr Lilley in a letter to the Chancellor.

The Shadow Chancellor has also asked the Chairman of the Treasury Select Committee to investigate these matters and he plans to put down parliamentary questions on

Continued on page 2, col 6



Party dress: Tory MPs Desmond Swayne, Tim Loughton, William Hague, Philip Hammond and John Redwood putting on the "casual" style in Eastbourne yesterday

A Tory MP's idea of casual dress? Suit yourself

By ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

WILLIAM HAGUE'S attempt to fashion a modern image for the Conservatives came apart at the seams yesterday at the start of a two-day bonding session for MPs.

The latest fault line in the parliamentary party was nothing to do with the usual flashpoint of Europe, but whether to be casual or smart.

Mr Hague issued an edict to his troops to dress in "relaxed style" for the gathering at the Grand Hotel in Eastbourne. But the MPs, denied their regulation pinstripe suits, could not agree on a uniform. The result was a riotous clash of sartorial cultures as Savile Row suits competed with country tweeds and knitted creations.

While Labour has redefined

itself by adopting colour coding and power dressing, the youngest Tory leader for 200 years has adopted a more informal approach. But even Mr Hague, 36, got it wrong. He arrived at the hotel in a smart dogmouth jacket, blue slacks, pale blue shirt, buckled shoes — and a red tie, which he was forced to abandon as he crossed the threshold.

Tories have never enjoyed the game of follow-my-leader and there were murmurs of discontent as the first MPs arrived for seminars on the "feminisation of society" and how to reconnect with the British people and their emotions. Sir Teddy Taylor (in corduroys and jumper) was contemptuous of the whole idea of bonding. "We can forget all this silly touchy-feely talk and public relations gimmickry. I'm here to talk about

What goes on in the mind of a man who gets up in the morning, puts on a military striped tie, then pulls a sweatshirt over the top?

Grace Bradberry, page 2

the single currency." There was a predictable stampede in the opposite direction.

One of the most sensitive logistical operations was the sleeping and seating arrangements. Michael Howard and Ann Widdecombe were seen heading for opposite ends of the five-star hotel, while Kenneth Clarke (in formal

suit) opted not to stay at all — the Grand is hardly the same as Mrs Cumpsty's £20 bed-and-breakfast lodgings.

But it was the conflicting dress code that was the most conspicuous failure of the day. Douglas Hogg at least made an effort in his thick woollen jumper, corduroys and brown rubber-soled walking boots — although the approach was marred by the reappearance of the fedora that irritated Tory spin-doctors so much that he was barred from wearing it during the election campaign.

Bernard Jenkin (Next jeans and check jacket) was proud to be voted fashion icon of the day. "I bought this jacket in 1987," he said. Andrew Robathan was in more sober corduroy trousers. "I'm too old to own a pair of jeans," the 46-year-old Blaby MP said.

After Mr Hague had addressed MPs, the new intake of Tory MPs was wheeled out for a photocall and realisation dawned that they represented a cross between Hermes, Jermyn Street and C&A. Collars were hastily loosened and jackets removed as Michael Fabricant (jeans, sweatshirt and boots) commented: "It's a new Tory split. We are split down the middle between suits, ties and blazers and dressing down." There was

also a fierce argument over the origins of Stephen Dorrell's brown woollen jumper with its spaghetti junction pattern.

By late afternoon, the 145 MPs had split into working parties to discuss how to become more women-voter-friendly. But as they bonded into the evening, there was no hand of friendship to the press outside the hotel grounds. The theme of their last seminar was how to improve relations with the media.

Pru rebuked over pensions review

Prudential Corporation has repudiated its "reassuring" statements in its handling of the pensions mis-selling review. The Securities and Investments Board said it had not acted with "due care, skill and diligence". Pages 25, 27

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'Candle' blazes to record sale

By EMMA WILKINS

IT MAY be only a candle in the wind, but Elton John's recent single has flickered past Back Street Boys' *White Christmas* at the speed of light.

Yesterday *Candle in the Wind 1997* was officially declared by the Guinness Book of Records to have become the biggest selling single record of all time. With 31.8 million sales already, the song performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, has in 37 days overhauled the 30 million sales it took Crosby, Stills and Nash to achieve.

Last night John said he was "thrilled and staggered" at the record's success, and he is expected to send a cheque for £20 million — from five million copies sold in Britain — to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund within the next few days. The record is expected eventually to raise more than £100 million, including £10 million that would have gone to the Treasury had it not surrendered its VAT revenue from the record.

Kate Knightley Day, spokeswoman for the fund, said that she was delighted by the new record. "It is amazing news and congratulations to Elton John. Everyone at the fund is thrilled."

ties are expected to start benefiting early next year after nine further trustees are appointed to join — Sarah McCord, the Princess's sister; Michael Gibbins, her private secretary; and Anthony Julius, her solicitor.

Candle in the Wind was replaced as Britain's number one by the Spice Girls this week. *Spiceworld* is their fifth successive chart-topper. The Beatles still hold the record as the artist with the most consecutive number one hits, with 11 from *From Me to You* in 1963 to *Let It Be* in 1970.

The other biggest selling singles are *Rock Around the Clock* by Bill Haley and his Comets (25 million copies) and *I Want to Hold Your Hand* by the Beatles (13 million). The Telethonettes are aiming for the Christmas pop charts with the release of their first single called *Telethonettes Say Eh-Oh*. But news of its release dismayed the Yorkshire musician Vincent Brown, who recorded his own song called *Tubby Anthem*. Proceeds were to go to the ChildLine charity but the BBC threatened legal action and halted the record.



"Forgive me Sir, I assumed you were going to Eastbourne"

Survivor tells of Algerian massacre

A TEACHER who survived one of Algeria's most horrific massacres described how 150 armed men entered Bentlha village, outside Algiers, and for 4½ hours, killed nearly everyone they could find.

The attack, which left 217 dead, occurred on the night of September 22-23. Most of the victims, including a six-year-old girl, had their throats cut, according to the witness. At least 34 women were abducted.

The Government blames the attack on Islamic extremists trying to win rural support through terror before tomorrow's local elections.

Night of terror, page 11

Foster children in court U-turn

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

TWO NIGERIAN children who were ordered to be returned to their natural mother to grow up in their "own race and culture" are now to remain with their white foster mother after a "courageous" U-turn by a High Court judge.

The children, aged eight and 10, have for more than a year faced being torn from the woman they regard as their mother and their home in the North East of England after Mr Justice Singer agreed they should return to their natural mother.

The natural mother, a 35-year-old living in London, had handed the boys over to the 52-year-old foster mother under a private arrangement when they were a few weeks old so that she could continue a business studies degree.

They remained with their foster mother, who has three adult children of her own, never spending more than a few weeks with their natural mother. When in 1995 she discovered she wanted them back and was planning to return to Nigeria, they were distraught.

The foster mother opposed their natural mother's legal battle for their return. She told the High Court the children were bed-wetting, crying and threatening to run away if

they were returned to their natural mother.

But despite her plea in July last year, Mr Justice Singer ruled, at a private hearing, that the youngsters must return to their natural mother to grow up in their "own race and culture", after she agreed to remain in Britain.

Devastated, the foster mother fought on, urging the Court of Appeal to overturn the ruling, only to be told the court could see no ground for interfering with Mr Justice Singer's decision. But despite her failed appeal last October and attempts by social workers to reassure the children they would still be able to visit their foster mother, nothing would persuade them to leave her.

On hearing that all contact between the children and their natural mother had "totally broken down", Mr Justice Singer decided he had no option but to reverse his ruling. At another private hearing in June this year he ruled that the children should remain with their foster mother and attempts should be made to restore contact between the children and their natural mother.

Yesterday it was the turn of the natural mother to appeal. Through her counsel, Eleanor

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Blair to announce Labour's first sell-off

By Philip Webster
POLITICAL EDITOR

TONY BLAIR will unveil Labour's first privatisation today and call on the Commonwealth to join his campaign to modernise national and international institutions.

The Prime Minister is to announce that the Government is to sell its majority holding in the £1.5 billion Commonwealth Development Corporation, which has investments in 54 poorer countries and manages 34 businesses across the world.

He wants to turn the body, which is based in London but has 25 local offices in developing countries, into a public-private partnership. The proceeds from the sale will go back into development aid. Mr Blair will say in a speech to the Commonwealth Business Forum two days before the Commonwealth heads of government summit opens in Edinburgh.

He will say that, although it is a change of approach for Labour, he is more interested in whether something works than in whether it is private or public.

The development corporation has for some time been self-financing. Its investments, originally prompted by public money, are now yielding funds that keep the organisation going without government support.

Mr Blair will say that he is determined that the Edinburgh summit will be a "historic turning point" for the Commonwealth, providing "an opportunity to modernise institutions and focus on the challenges for a new century".

The Government believes that the development corporation is underused and will benefit by being freed from access to the capital markets. The aim is to provide substantial extra money for commercial investments and the sale, Mr Blair will say, will underline Britain's commitment to helping to fight world poverty.

Last night Clare Short, the International Development Secretary, welcomed the move and said she wanted the corporation to play a bigger role.

The Tory MPs who dress to kill style

WHAT goes on in the mind of a man who gets up in the morning, puts on a military striped tie, then pulls a sweatshirt over the top?

As photographs emerge of the sartorial devastation wreaked in Eastbourne this week, it is a question that the Tory party's image-makers must face.

There are men in the party who have never forgotten Bertrand Russell's gibe about Anthony Eden — "Not a gentleman; dresses too well" — and have struggled for just the right level of incompetence ever since. It is in their casual gear that

they attain true social grandeur. Jumpers pulled down so that the pained bulges through work shirts combined with jeans, double-breasted blazers with gilt buttons these are a few of the finer touches on show this week.

Many MPs seem to suffer a sort of hangover from their boyhoods, when as a protest at the cost of the public school uniform their parents would buy them only one pair of casual trousers. Belts, shoes, even shirts, had to "carry over" — and they have continued this thrifty policy ever since.

The most basic piece of

Grace Bradberry offers a few tips on casual dressing to the fashionably challenged MPs meeting in Eastbourne for William Hague's bonding session where sweatshirts clash with striped ties

advice is that clothes should go with one another. Nylon work shirts should never be worn with casual trousers. There are plenty of Oxford cotton shirts around and if it's chilly these can be worn under sweaters — with one button open and no tie.

Brown needlecord and blue jeans both go with brown shoes or boots, not with black work shoes. Belts

should match, as should socks. Tasselled loafers are not pleasant. Chinos are fine — but can give the impressions that you are a member of Special Branch.

An MP's sense of humour, normally expressed through his tie, should not be allowed to gravitate to his feet: nothing is likely to infuriate the masses more than a "witty" pair of

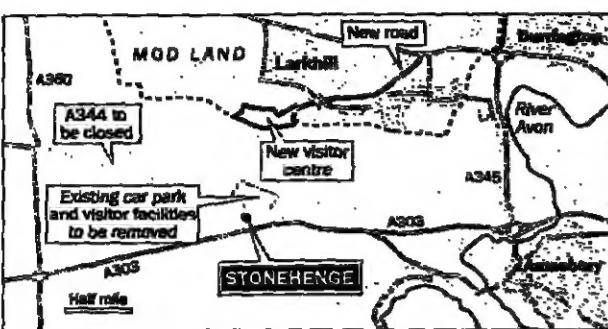
socks. Sweaters should be plain. Horizontal stripes only emphasise the effects of heavy Westminster lunches. Diamond patterns are heinous. There is no need to be fashionable.

The green shoots of Tory recovery were perhaps best seen yesterday in an attractive tweed jacket worn with a Liberty cotton check shirt, under a plain crew-neck sweater. However, it would certainly help if a few Tory MPs could manage to be in touch with the late 1990s. Golfing umbrellas should be taken nowhere but the golf course. The ubiquitous Barbour should be

swapped for black nylon jackets that bear some resemblance to the Prada ones — nobody outside the party wants to be reminded of the size of your estate or your prowess on the grousemoor. And if your estate is a 20ft garden in the constituency, then it is even wiser not to play the country squire.

The British designers Nicole Farhi and Paul Smith are renowned for their casual knitwear, while Richard James, the new wave St James's tailor produces stretch Bedford cords and brightly coloured tweed jackets.

Clothes image, page 16



MoD drops opposition to road for Stonehenge

By Dalya Alberge

AN IMAGINATIVE scheme to conserve Stonehenge received a dramatic boost when the Ministry of Defence gave the all-clear to a crucial new road over its land.

Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, was delighted but expressed dismay that it had taken so long. The MoD, which owns the northern part of the World Heritage Site, has for the past five years refused permission, on the grounds of security, because the headquarters of

the Royal Artillery are based there, at Larkhill. "I had made no progress with them," Mr Stevens said. "They have always been a very difficult department. They always say, 'You can't do that' and 'You can't come here'. They played security as a card which prevented any consultation or examination."

It was, he said, the intervention of Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, that made all the difference. The news came months after an initial



A security guard patrols the ancient stones where visitors, banned since the 1980s, could be allowed once more.

£44 million scheme was scrapped even though it had the backing of government archaeologists and the local community. It had been unexpectedly rejected by the Millennium Commission.

English Heritage was told only that its £22 million bid faced stiff competition from other schemes, despite warnings that Stonehenge was suffering every day from the weight and volume of traffic along a road passing 300 yards away from the

monument. An estimated 20,000 vehicles make the standing stones vibrate 18 hours a day.

The MoD's decision will mean that a new road can be driven through their property. A visitor centre, complete with parking for 2,000 cars, will be built to cater for the million people who visit each year and everything will be out of sight from the stones.

The scheme is badly needed. Recent surveys reflected that more than half of their visitors

find the experience "very disappointing", while a 1992 report branded the site a "national disgrace". The original plans submitted to the Millennium Commission will have to be reworked, allowing for the change of access. An application is likely to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Sir Jocelyn stressed that the new road, which will be about three-quarters of a mile long, will not interfere with the military camp. He added that

people will be able to walk freely around the stones for the first time since the mid-1980s. Ropes, fences and wires will be removed. "There will be no sign of any 20th-century developments. For anyone over a certain age, walking among the stones is one of the most unforgettable experiences. This has always been part of my plan. Some said it was dangerous, but people are unlikely to steal them. They weigh 40 tons each."

U-turn

Continued from page 1
Platt, QC, she urged the Court of Appeal to overturn the latest ruling. Miss Platt told Lady Justice Butler-Sloss and Lord Justice Thorpe that Mr Justice Singer's U-turn had been mistaken in law.

"It is a racial and cultural issue. If these children are removed there may well be initial trauma but they will settle," she said.

But Lady Justice Butler-Sloss, who dismissed the application for leave to appeal, said: "Everyone has underestimated the difficulties. You do not really want these children to be taken against their will to their mother and when they are old enough to vote with their feet to go back to the foster mother."

Upholding Mr Justice Singer's latest ruling, with the agreement of her colleagues, she said: "The judge did dramatically change his mind. But I have to say his reversal of his decision was extremely courageous in the agonisingly difficult circumstances of this case."

Euro 'profits'

Continued from page 1
The Government will today be forced for the first time to answer questions in Parliament on the row. Ministers refused an Opposition demand for an emergency debate on EMU in the Lords — which has already reconvened — but the Tories have managed to change the title of today's opposition day debate on savings and pensions to include "the need for stability in the financial markets".

Business and union leaders meanwhile urged the Government to leave open the option of joining the single currency within the next five years.

Adair Turner, director general of the CBI, said there was a good economic case for excluding entry in the first wave, but ruling out membership of single currency for a longer period would harm Britain's business interests. He nevertheless called for the Government to make a statement as soon as possible.

John Monks, the TUC general secretary, repeated his view yesterday that Britain should join as quickly as possible. He was "absolutely confident" that the euro would go ahead on time and that it would be very uncomfortable for Britain if it stayed out.

The Chancellor, whose formal statement may come early next week, is expected to couch his message in language designed to reassure pro-Europeans inside and outside Parliament. There were hints yesterday that he would promise to use the period between now and the next election to try to create the conditions for the pound to join soon afterwards if the public mood has switched in favour.

It emerged yesterday that Mr Blair's opposition to early entry is based on economic as well as political grounds, and that he believes it will take all of four or five years for the Government to make a judgment on whether joining would be in Britain's best interests.

EU ministers to taste delights of Blackburn

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

JUSTICE ministers and senior police officers from the 15 member states are to taste the highlights of Blackburn during Britain's forthcoming presidency of the European Union.

The Lancashire town is to host an anti-soccer-hooligan summit early next year intended to prevent thugs wrecking the World Cup in France. Blackburn has been chosen for the two-day seminar because it is the constituency of Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, who has represented since 1979.

Mr Straw was in Paris yesterday to meet his French counterpart, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, wants expertise to be pooled to ensure that the scenes before and during England's qualifier in Rome are not repeated.

"The message has got to go out — and it is going out — that we will do everything we

can to undermine and disrupt the activities of those who have no interest in seeing football tournaments go ahead, but simply in committing violence and mayhem. We are not going to have it and that is the purpose of the co-operation," he said.

The town does not immediately spring to mind as one of the great conference venues but Ewood Park, the home ground of Blackburn Rovers, has conference facilities which can house hundreds.

Mr Straw, a regular on the terraces for home games, decided that Ewood Park would be the ideal spot for his fellow interior and justice minister to join football administrators and senior police officers from across the EU for the conference.

He is planning on the seminar ending just before kick-off on Saturday, en-

abling his guests to join him for a home match. Ken Beattie, commercial manager of the club, currently second in the Premier League, said last night: "We are delighted. As far as I am concerned it is a prestigious seminar for us to be involved in."

But the decision to choose Blackburn has one major disadvantage. The town has no good hotels, according to a council spokesman. But the spokesman said that within a few miles, in Clitheroe and the Ribbles Valley, Mr Straw's guests would be able to find comfortable accommodation or rooms at the Red House Hotel, only a few miles from the town.

The Home Secretary has, however, secured a bargain that will delight the Treasury. The facilities at Ewood Park are being provided free, the Home Office said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cosmetic tests on animals continue

Animals may continue to be used to test the safety of cosmetics for at least another five years, despite an election campaign pledge to end the practice, and a proposal to set up a Royal Commission on animal experiments has been set aside for the time being.

Some 2,800 animals were used to test cosmetics in Britain last year; 2.7 million were used in other research. Lord Williams of Mostyn, junior Home Office minister, said no new licences for using animals to test cosmetics had been issued since May, but four remained in force and the last would not run out until 2002. He said the Government's hands were tied by an EU directive which provided for a ban when "acceptable" alternative tests were available; there had been no agreement on accepted alternatives.

Tube train death

A boy aged 11 was killed when he fell beneath a train at Holborn station on the London Underground. The adult accompanying the boy was treated at the scene for shock. Chief Inspector Brian Gosden, of the Transport Police, said: "It appears to be a tragic accident."

Stalking charge

A man acquitted of murdering a young mother in his village has been charged with two offences under the new laws to prevent stalking. Mark Weston, 22, of Ascot-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire, was arrested and charged under the Protection from Harassment Act.

GP took heroin

A GP faces expulsion from his surgery after being convicted of taking heroin and injecting his lover, a nurse, with the drug. Michael Jones, 35, of the Marple Cottage Surgery, Manchester, was fined £2,000 by Stockport magistrates after admitting possessing, supplying and stealing heroin.

Street shooting

Two men were shot in the street by an unidentified man, after an altercation when he pushed the mother of one of them. After the incident on Saturday night, the gunman put the pistol into his waistband and walked off into an estate near London Bridge, South London.

College dangers

The probable cause of a doubling in the number of university cases of meningitis in two years, from 189 in 1994 to 424 in 1996, was the lifestyle of students in their first year in college. They kissed, shared drinks and met more carriers, a conference on managing the illness was told yesterday.

5 held over attack

Police arrested five men yesterday after an attack on Sunday with baseball bats on Lee Holmes, 27, in Wodnesfield, West Midlands. Mr Holmes, who had chased youths who were taunting his disabled father, is critically ill in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Diana debate

Anglican bishops debated whether the Church of England had acted as an effective conduit for the nation's grief over the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. A spokesman said they had reflected on what the events of the week before the funeral meant for the mission of the Church.

Sex attack arrest

A 23-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of a brutal sex attack on a woman who was dumped in the boot of her car after being abducted in Loughborough town centre and raped in fields last Saturday. The assault lasted seven hours. The car was later found by a farmer near Belton.

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IRA bomb gang leader shot dead as police raided hideout, jury told

Old Bailey hears how an armed officer opened fire in hotel raid that thwarted a terrorist unit's London plot, reports Tim Jones

AN IRA plot to launch a bombing campaign in London ended with one of the leaders shot dead in a police raid, the Old Bailey was told yesterday.

The five-man unit had amassed tons of improvised explosives as a "deadly cargo" to be loaded on the backs of lorries, David Waters, for the prosecution, said. The terrorists were thwarted, a jury was told, by a huge surveillance operation by police and security officers which ended in the death of Diarmuid O'Neill.

Police preparing to raid room 303 of the Premier West

Hotel in Hammersmith thought that O'Neill and his two lieutenants would be armed and feared they were about to unleash their bombing campaign. Mr Waters said that with the benefit of hindsight, Kilo need not have fired because no firearms were found in the room.

"But the officers did not know that. They were concerned with the arrest of suspected terrorists and had every reason to think they were armed and likely to use weapons."

Kilo had fired, Mr Waters said, after the officers had lost the element of surprise when a card key had failed to work and they had tried to smash down the door. CS gas was fired into the room but it confused and blinded not only the IRA unit but also the arresting officers.

In the confusion, O'Neill, 27, was fatally wounded when he failed to respond to Kilo who screamed at him to show him his hands. Mr Waters said: "A strong element of fear was no doubt present in the officer when he shouted out. No evidence of any hands was shown. All the officer could see was a figure kneeling towards him. He thought he was going to be shot so he fired twice. He thought he had missed so he fired more shots."

He added: "The unit had expressed the intention of killing any coppers, from whom they feared apprehension. Kilo was feeling vulnerable and perhaps terrified. The room was dark and the hallway where he was standing was lit. Kilo was standing in the light, perhaps silhouetted in his mind in the light."

Mr Waters added: "However, the loss of O'Neill's life is, and it is, whether Kilo panicked or not, should not deflect you from the issue in this case. That is whether the defendants were part of an active service unit planning to



Patrick Kelly, Brian McHugh, James Murphy and Michael Phillips in the Old Bailey dock. They deny conspiracy to cause explosions

bomb targets in London." The jury heard that before the raid on September 23 officers taking part had been shown a video of the IRA's bomb factory at an industrial estate at Hornsey where the gang kept three Kalashnikov rifles, two handguns and stacks of ammunition.

Inside the unit they rented on the estate, Mr Waters said, the gang had stored tons of ammonium nitrate-based fertiliser and sugar, a quantity of high explosive Semtex, timers,

fuses and detonators. He said: "By the end of September 1996, they had stored in North London - in the words of the forensic scientist who examined the equipment - the wherewithal to mount a devastating campaign of terrorism."

"After they were left in place, the bombs would not explode until the time delay mechanisms had expired, by which time the defendants would be well away from the area and safe, in sharp con-

trast to any members of the public near the lorries." Patrick Kelly, 31, Brian McHugh, 31, James Murphy, 26, from Chelsea and Michael Phillips, 22, from Crawley, all deny conspiring to cause explosions likely to endanger life or property.

Two of the men, Murphy, an assistant groundsman at Latimer Upper School in Shepherd's Bush, and Phillips, a mechanical engineer employed by British Airways at Gatwick were involved from

the start with O'Neill in planning the bombing campaign.

McHugh, described as head of the unit, and Kelly, did not arrive in London from Ireland until a safe location had been found for the explosives. The six-week operation to track down the Unit codenamed Operation Tinnitus involved scores of members of the Metropolitan Police and officers from the intelligence services.

The IRA squad was well rehearsed in anti-IRA methods

and took extreme care to avoid being followed. In spite of their caution, anti-terrorist officers planted listening and tracking devices in their cars and traced telephone calls they made to a kiosk in a village in the Irish Republic.

Eventually, after the gang had made several trips to Beighton, Sheffield, they were seen picking up a lorry which had been delivered by a driver who was allowed to fly back to Ireland.

The case continues.

Remand for man accused of Russell murders

By Emma Wilkins

MICHAEL STONE was remanded in custody for a week yesterday after appearing before magistrates to be charged with the murders of Lin and Megan Russell.

Stone, 37, of Gillingham, Kent, who is unemployed, spoke only to confirm his name and address during the three-minute hearing before Medway magistrates in Chatham, Kent.

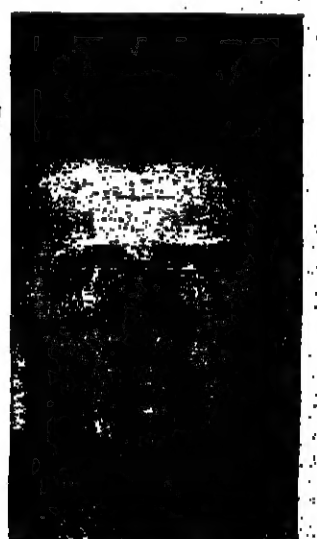
He is also charged with the attempted murder of Josie Russell, 10, whose recovery from brain injuries has received much publicity. Josie, her mother, 45, and sister, 6, were walking home through a cornfield near Chiddenden, Kent, in July last year when they were attacked by a man with a hammer. Mrs Russell and Megan were battered to death and Josie was left for dead. The family dog, Lucy, was also killed.

Stone was first arrested in July days after a BBC *Crime-watch* reconstruction was screened to coincide with the first anniversary of the murders. He was later charged with crimes unrelated to the killings. Stone cut a dishevelled figure in the dock, dressed in a large, grey, striped sweatshirt and trousers, sneakers and blue sports shirt.

Flanked by two prison guards, he was impassive as John Wheeler, clerk of the court, read the charges that, between July 8 and 11, 1996, he murdered Lin and Megan Russell and attempted to murder Josie.

After hearing that there was no application for bail, Dr Woodford said: "Stand up, Mr Stone. You will be remanded in custody until Wednesday October 29, morning court. Thank you, you may go."

After the hearing Derek Hayward, Stone's solicitor, read out a statement protesting his client's innocence. "Michael Stone would like to make it clear that he is innocent of these offences," Mr Hayward said. "This is a matter that has been continuously denied by him throughout all the police inquiries. There is nothing further to say at this stage."



Diarmuid O'Neill was killed by armed police

Lovelorn war veteran is fined for stalking

By A Staff Reporter

A WAR veteran aged 77 who waged a hate campaign against his former lover and his septuagenarian rival yesterday became the oldest person to be fined for stalking.

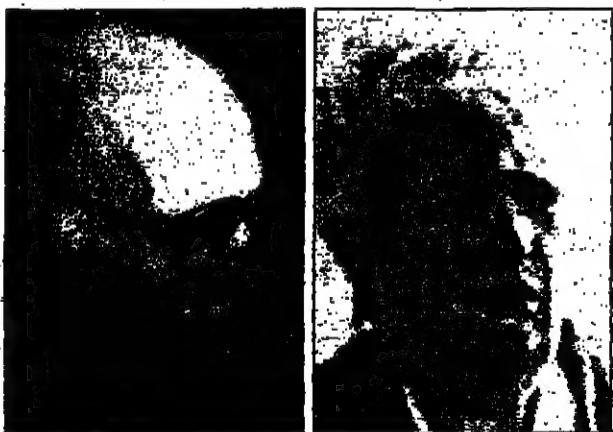
For eight months James Monk, a former RAF officer, bombarded Mary Sands, 53, with abusive telephone calls and sent her friends photographs and explicit letters boasting of their sexual exploits together.

When Monk, a retired film publicist, discovered that Mrs Sands was seeing David Bussey, 74, he pursued the couple and daubed graffiti on the walls of the house where they were staying.

Magistrates were told how Monk acted out of a broken heart, never thinking that he could feel so strongly for a woman "at his ripe old age".

The couple had met through a "lonely hearts" column. Monk showered Mrs Sands with expensive gifts, though their relationship soured after she asked him for a £6,000 loan and he accused her of being a gold-digger.

Mrs Sands was so upset by his vengeful campaign that



James Monk and Mary Sands, whom he bombarded with abusive calls after their relationship soured

she was off work for 14 weeks and close to a nervous breakdown. Monk accused her of trying to get her "greedy hands" on his savings, according to Jo Patrick, for the prosecution.

Miss Patrick told Market Harborough Magistrates' Court how the victim found a tyre on her car damaged while she was staying overnight at Mr Bussey's home in Markfield, Leicestershire. As she drove to work the next day the tyre blew out but she

managed to control the car. Monk, of Leicester, admitted harassing Mrs Sands between January 1 and August 27 this year. He was fined £1,000 and ordered to pay £2,000 compensation to his former lover, a part-time shopworker, another £1,000 to Mr Bussey, and told not to contact the couple for at least a year.

The former RAF NCO became the oldest man in Britain to be convicted under laws brought in earlier this year to protect victims from stalkers.

Son wins grant from his mother

By Shirley English

A MOTHER being sued by her son for maintenance was ordered yesterday to pay £60 a month towards his student living expenses until a full hearing into the case is heard next year.

Patrick Macdonald, 20, who is studying law at Aberdeen University, had claimed he needed £400 from his mother, Margaret Macdonald, 53, who earns £45,000 a year as a Scottish Office solicitor.

The student, who won legal aid to pursue the case, was also told by Sheriff Daphne Robertson to find a part-time job during term time if he was hard-up. In a written judgment released at Edinburgh Sheriff Court, Sheriff Robertson said Mrs Macdonald should make interim payments, restricted to term time, until the full hearing.

Earlier, the sheriff was told that Mr Macdonald, who has not spoken to his mother for almost five years, had decided not to take part-time work because it might interfere with his studies. He already receives a maximum student loan of £1,685 and a grant of £1,739.

Medallion man at fever pitch as disco classic stays alive

By Damian Whitworth

AN AFFLICTION that causes otherwise normal people to put on white suits and medallions and listen to dangerous levels of 1970s disco music is predicted to sweep the country. *Saturday Night Fever*, which first infected cinema-goers 20 years ago when John Travolta strutted across the screen, is to resurface next year as a musical.

The Bee Gees, who wrote the songs for the film, including *How Deep Is Your Love*, *Stayin' Alive*, and *Night Fever*, have joined the veteran producer Robert Stigwood to launch the show, which will be at the London Palladium from next May. They will not be performing but have written

two new songs for the stage version. After flying from America yesterday, the three Gibb brothers, who were born on the Isle of Man, apologised that they no longer sported the long hair and kitsch clothes of the 1970s. "No white suits or medallions. Sorry to disappoint you," said Barry Gibb.

The film soundtrack album was the most successful ever, selling 50 million copies, and the film inspired an explosion in the popularity of discos.

"We find it very unusual that the culture we're in today seems to be looking back to the Seventies after going through a period of forgetting about them," Barry Gibb said. Asked if he thought the musical in which Travolta gyrated so earnestly might now look faintly ridiculous, he said:

"*Saturday Night Fever* was high camp. It was silly in one respect and great fun in another. But it was extremely successful."

The Travolta role in the £4 million London show will be played by Adam Garcia, a 24-year-old Australian, who was aged four the last time around but who has seen the film on video. The men who are responsible for getting the world on to the dance floor admitted yesterday that they don't dance themselves. "We can't surf, we can't dance, but we cruise," Barry said.

But there was still one mystery to clear up. What did happen to the medallions? "I still have two," Barry said. "We might have sparked the idea of people wearing medallions, but latterly I don't wear them."

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COMPAQ

Britain will reject you, Gypsies told



Stranded: Barbra with her grandmother, Anna

By Richard Ford, home correspondent

THE Slovak Embassy joined British ministers yesterday in trying to stop hundreds of Gypsies seeking asylum in Britain. As a further 30 Czech and Slovak Gypsies headed for Dover, the Slovak authorities warned that they would not be welcome in Britain.

Earlier in the day 23 Czechs and one Slovak had arrived at Dover, bringing the number who have sought asylum since the weekend to 220. After being interviewed by immigration officials, 13 of the 24 withdrew asylum claims and were returned to France.

The Slovak Embassy intervened after a series of interviews with Mike O'Brien, the Immigration Minister, were broadcast and published in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. He gave warning that bogus asylum-seekers would be treated toughly.

In the statement the embassy said: "We warn everyone who is planning to come to the UK and apply through the asylum system to think twice." Slovak officials said they were determined to stop benefit cheats.

Sir Brian Mahonney, the Shadow Home Secretary, has written to Mr O'Brien demanding that the Government protect the local services of the people in Kent by imposing visa requirements on all Czech and Slovak citizens. Visa re-

quirements have been imposed on countries such as Colombia that suddenly produce an increase in asylum-seekers, but in this case it would cause diplomatic difficulties, given the Government's policy of encouraging integration between Central European states and the EU.

Last night Geoffrey Martin, who represents the European Commission in Britain, defended the system for asylum-seekers. "There is absolutely no evidence that slack border controls have contributed to the current situation," he said.

The Dublin Convention, the agreement that has undermined Britain's ability to remove EU asylum-seekers travelling without visas, was signed in 1990 by David Waddington, then the Conservative Home Secretary. It came into force last month.

Until then, any asylum-seeker travelling without a visa who passed through another EU state could be sent back on the ground that the application should have been lodged with the first safe country. Now, non-EU asylum-seekers travelling without a visa can apply for asylum in the country in which they wish to live.

Isabel Fonseca, page 18
Leading article and
Letters, page 19



No entry: a family waits to board a bus back to Slovakia after hearing that others had been refused permission to enter Britain

Losers and winners wait for their fate

Adrian Lee and Susan Bell report on the refugees on both sides of the Channel

CLUSTERED in a disused home for the elderly, the latest batch of 19 asylum-seekers to arrive in England knew they were the lucky ones. In Calais, 50 Czech and Slovak Gypsies, including 30 children, woke up from a night on the ferry terminal floor after being refused entry to Britain.

Two families at Calais decided to accept an offer of free transport home, but others have now opted to seek political asylum in France. Although they have little chance of success, the French

authorities are powerless to move them on, as they have the right to stay within the EU's open-frontier area for three months.

A weary French immigration official said: "All their passports were issued within the last few weeks. We get the clear impression that it suits their Government to get rid of these people."

Milan, 34, the Calais group's self-appointed spokesman, cradling his three-year-old daughter, Barbra, said: "All we want is to work freely and for our

kids to be able to go to school without being afraid."

He was refused entry to Britain with his wife and five children, and claimed that most of the group had no idea what they were doing when they agreed to sign deportation papers.

In Margate, some of the 19 women and children spending their first full day in England described how they watched a documentary on their compatriots' lifestyle in Britain and immediately began selling furniture to buy travel tickets. They said that they were waved through Germany and France, where only cursory checks of their passport were made.

The group comes mainly from Brno, in the east of the

Czech Republic, where they claimed to have been evicted from an apartment block. Natasha, 46, a street cleaner who travelled with her husband, Aladar, two daughters and six grandchildren, said: "The landlords said if we did not go voluntarily we would be on the streets."

"Nobody in our lives has treated us as well as the people here in England. People used to shout at us. 'You go to the gas chambers.' We want to be allowed to work here. I don't want to be rich. I want to be like the poor of England."

Jana, 37, is with her two children, aged 13 and 14, but her husband is one of seven men in the group being held by immigration officials. She

said: "We did not want to stop in Germany because there are skinheads there. It was only England."

The old people's home was shut in July when a boiler failed. It has been reopened at a cost of £1,000 a day. Yesterday the children played happily with toys given by Kent Social Services, and ate chicken burgers and chips for lunch. Extra supplies were ordered. Mattresses have been brought in to provide up to 100 places in the 43-room building, and an interpreter provided.

Staff prepared for a further 30 arrivals last night and said that two teenagers had to be prevented from going out, drenched in aftershave, a few hours after arrival.

Lifestyle is worth more than pay, say students

By DAVID CHARTER

HIGH-FLYING students are turning their backs on careers and demanding that employers give them more chance to enjoy life, an international survey showed yesterday.

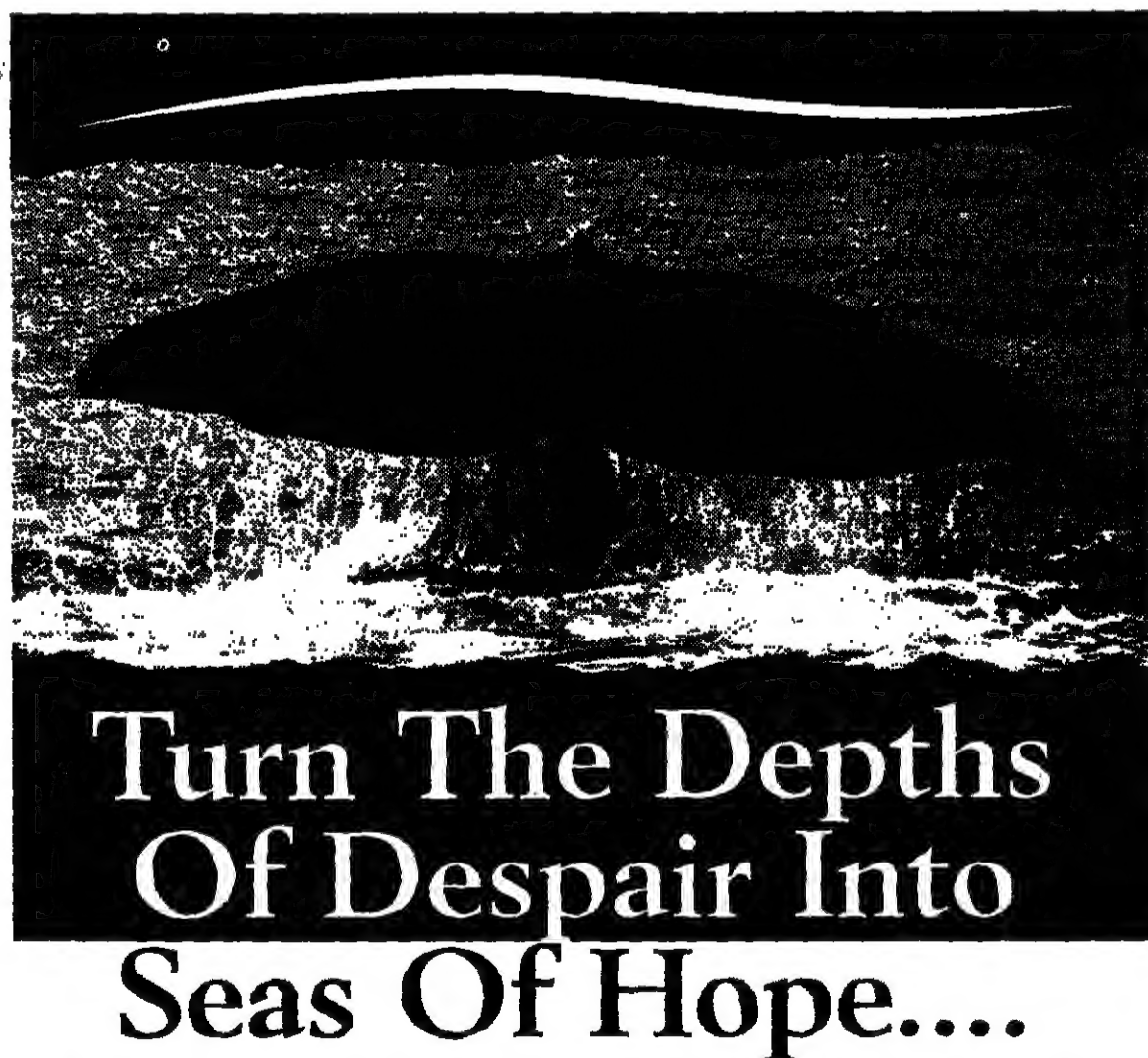
British students said that a rewarding life outside work was more important than pay and promotion. With graduates enjoying a boom in job prospects, they appear to be at the forefront of a global trend towards "achieving a balanced lifestyle" as their top priority.

Some 1,200 students graduating from business, accounting, economics and marketing courses were questioned by Coopers & Lybrand for WFD, a lifestyle consultancy for employers. The British students went to the London School of Economics and Manchester and Oxford universities.

Their peers in the United States cited salary as their main incentive but, in all but one of the ten countries surveyed, students said lifestyle was one of their top two priorities. The exception was South Korea.

Given a range of 14 options, 45 per cent of the international sample chose "achieving a balanced lifestyle and having a rewarding life outside of work" as one of their three future career goals. In second place overall, chosen by 33 per cent, was "building a sound private financial base", and third, chosen by 28 per cent, was "achieving a position where I can work and travel internationally".

Liz Barch, chief executive of WFD, said: "The onus is on employers to find the flexibility to meet both their business goals and their employees' needs. As unemployment falls, competition to attract and retain the best employees will intensify."



Turn The Depths Of Despair Into Seas Of Hope....

More than 1000 whales will be brutally killed in the next 12 months.

This week, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), meets in Monaco to debate the future of the world's remaining whales.

Eleven years after the IWC agreed a moratorium on commercial whaling, Norway and Japan are 'bending the rules' to catch an ever-increasing number of whales.

Norway exempted itself from the moratorium and ignores the wishes of its neighbours in the European Union who stopped whaling long ago. Japan is defying the wishes of the nations of the world by catching whales for so-called "scientific" purposes in the Southern Ocean sanctuary.

On behalf of IFAW's 500,000 supporters in the UK we encourage the establishment of a Global Ocean Sanctuary to protect whales in all waters.

Only decisive action from Britain and other non-whaling nations will make a difference.

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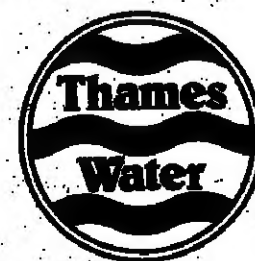
Our radar scanning equipment can send a stream of electronic pulses through the ground which will not only locate where the pipe is buried but the existence of any unusually wet area of soil.

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Great East

Rector 'wanted lover and her friend in bed'

A WOMAN let a friend use her home for a love affair with a clergyman, a court heard yesterday, but she drew the line when she was invited to join in their bedroom sessions. Jane Cook, a counter clerk at the local building society office, said that she disapproved of the relationship between her friend, Iris Green, a music teacher, and the Rev Clifford Williams. When she was told that the rector wanted her to join in, she said: "You've got to be joking."

Building society woman says she lent home for affair, but declined to join in. Russell Jenkins reports

charges of giving "just cause for scandal or offence". He denies an adulterous six-year affair with Mrs Green, 56, a member of his parish at Benllech, Anglesey. He also denies an improper relationship with another married parishioner, Anne Williams. Mrs Cook said that Mrs Green had given music lessons to her son, and had a key to her house at Tregarth, near Bangor, after doing cleaning and ironing for her. Mrs Green was said to have confided in her younger friend about the affair, and asked whether she could use the house because the clergyman did not want his car to be seen on her driveway. Mrs Cook admitted that she had never actually

seen them together at her home, but she believed they had visited it. "Iris had told me quite a lot of detail about the relationship. She does not tell lies. I have no reason to believe that wasn't true from what I saw. I believe it to be true. "She said he had mentioned he would have liked the two of us to sleep with him. I wasn't prepared to do that. In any case, I thought it was rather amusing actually. We both thought it was highly amusing."

Mrs Cook recalled meeting Mr Williams when he called at Mrs Green's house in Tyny-Gongl, Anglesey, and thought it odd that her friend should sit at his feet by the sofa. The clergyman ruffled Mrs Green's hair in a gesture that Mrs Cook described as possessive, rather than affectionate. "I thought it wasn't a good relationship."

Tapes of answerphone messages, allegedly left by Mr Williams on Mrs Green's telephone, were played to the court. One recording, catching the speaker's Welsh accent, said: "I just rang up to say good night, love you."

Another read: "Hello, mine hotspot, how are you today? I have missed you a lot. I cannot wait to see you more, so I'll ring back this evening. OK. I love you."

In the third tape, the speakers are arguing heatedly. Mrs Green is allegedly berating Mr Williams for spending so much time at the home of Anne Williams. The man tells her: "That's stupid... absolutely paranoid."

Mrs Green then says: "If I spent a fraction of the time with another man, you would be absolutely paranoid. You are a liar. Go and stick with darling Anne. You can't stay away from her." The man says: "Shut up."

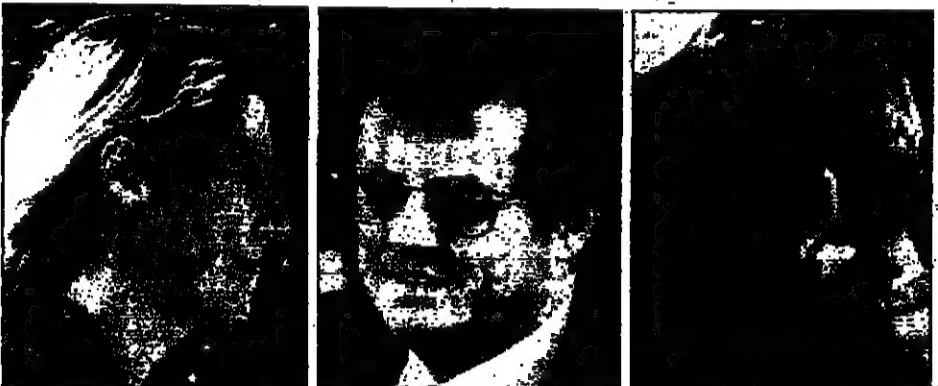
Mrs Green repeats: "You stick to your darling Anne" twice before they say their goodbyes and hang up. The voice on several of the tapes was identified as that of Mr Williams by an expert linguist and two church colleagues.

Peter Wright, a former senior lecturer in English dialects at Salford University, said he came to the conclusion that "unfortunately, it was Clifford's voice".

The hearing continues.



Anne Williams: she was the subject of an argument in taped conversations



The friends and the rector: Jane Cook, left, said she believed that Iris Green, right, who had a spare key, had used her home for trysts with the Rev Clifford Williams

NEWS IN BRIEF

Study into prejudice offends Muslims

A report into the rise of anti-Muslim prejudice in Britain will be launched today by the Home Secretary amid claims from some Muslims that it demeans their community. The report, *Islamophobia: A Challenge to Us All*, was produced by an independent commission set up by the Runnymede Trust. It condemns bigoted views of Islam which see it as barbaric, sexist and primitive. But this week's *Muslim News* said the report was one-sided with an "un-critically Jewish" view of the Muslim community.

Thailand letter

The mother of Lena Young, 3, who was found begging on the streets of Thailand after the death of her father, an English actor, nearly four years ago, has received her first letter from social security officials. It follows publicity about her plight.

Royal portrait

An enamel of George III as Prince of Wales, unseen by the public for 250 years, has been sold at Christie's to a museum for £128,000. It is one of only five examples of miniatures painted by Jean-Etienne Liotard, the 18th-century Swiss artist.

Fell walker dies

A middle-aged woman fell 250ft to her death as she and her boyfriend were walking on Birker Fell near Seathwaite in the Lake District. Sue Belcher, a mother of two of Riddlesden, West Yorkshire, was an officer with Bradford City Council.

Pigeon's medal

A Dickin Medal — the "animal VC" — from 1943 is to be sold at Billingshurst, West Sussex, on November 10 for an estimated £3,500. It was awarded to a pigeon that had helped to rescue a ditched air crew by delivering a message to its base 100 miles away.

Ailing ladybirds prompt warning on genetically modified crops

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

SCIENTISTS in Scotland have urged caution in the introduction of genetically modified crops after discovering that they could harm ladybirds.

birds that ate aphids that had fed on genetically modified potatoes laid fewer eggs and lived only half as long as the average. The team tested a potato plant that had been modified to produce a natural insecticide that discouraged aphids from feeding on them.

attack by aphids in greenhouse conditions. The reduction, of 50 per cent, was useful, but insufficient on its own, so it was important that ladybirds, the natural predators of aphids, also did their work.

The team says in the annual report of the SCRI that the ladybirds continued to eat the aphids so it was clear that there had been no change in the palatability of the aphids. However, once the ladybirds mated, the females laid fewer eggs, and the number failing to hatch in the first week was almost three times higher — 9.2 on normal potatoes, compared with 23 on the genetically modified potatoes.

When males that had eaten aphids from the transgenic potatoes were mated with normal females, four times as many unfertilised eggs resulted. The females lived only 36 days if they had eaten aphids from the transgenic potatoes, rather than the normal 74 days. The lifespan of the males was unaffected.

These results suggest that introducing transgenic crops of this type could have some unexpected consequences and that strategies for using them must be tested carefully first, under field conditions. The team suggests that planting transgenic and normal crops in adjacent fields could reduce any damaging effects on ladybirds. Longer-term experiments over several generations are now needed, they say.

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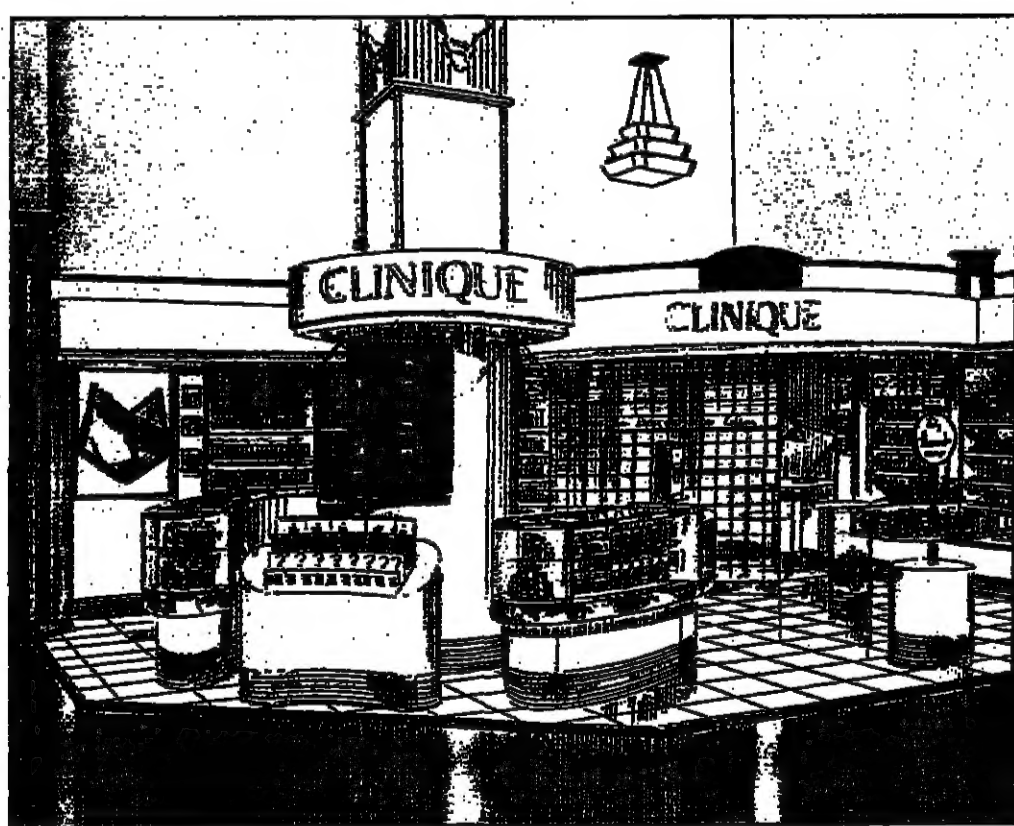
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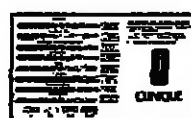
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More of good ideas

Prince outlines role for alternative therapies

Ian Murray on a call for health professionals to take the use of complementary therapy seriously

THE Prince of Wales last night launched a national debate into the role of complementary medicine. In a lecture at St James's Palace, he outlined his idea for using alternative therapies alongside conventional medicine to create "more patient-centred healthcare".

He said that tremendous advances had been made in scientific and biological research, to the extent that conditions once thought untreatable could be cured. "But clearly this alone is not fulfilling all our healthcare needs as large numbers of people are paying to seek help from complementary medical practitioners. We simply cannot ignore what is a very real social phenomenon."

He said some complementary treatments seemed to work where orthodox ones

failed. "We need to create an environment in which patient-centred healthcare can flourish."

His initiative is an attempt to end confusion over the multitude of complementary and alternative medicines, establish through research which of them are effective, then work out regulations for their use in tandem with conventional medicines.

There are 143 professional organisations for complementary and alternative medicines, covering 14 disciplines including acupuncture and yoga. This has led to a confusing situation for doctors and the growing number of patients who ask to be referred to complementary medical practitioners. The confusion is compounded by there being at least 100 courses for training in com-



The Prince, left, shares his interest in alternative medicine with his grandfather, George VI, right

plementary and alternative medicines, many of them unaccredited by the organisations concerned.

Recent surveys have shown that 25 per cent of patients have tried complementary and alternative medicines, that 20 per cent of GPs have asked for some kind of training about them and that 40 per cent of GPs have made a referral to such a practitioner.

Complementary medicine sales are now well over £100 million a year and the amount sold is increasing by 15 per cent annually. The National Health Service pays for a tiny amount of alternative treatment — not more than about £1 million nationally.

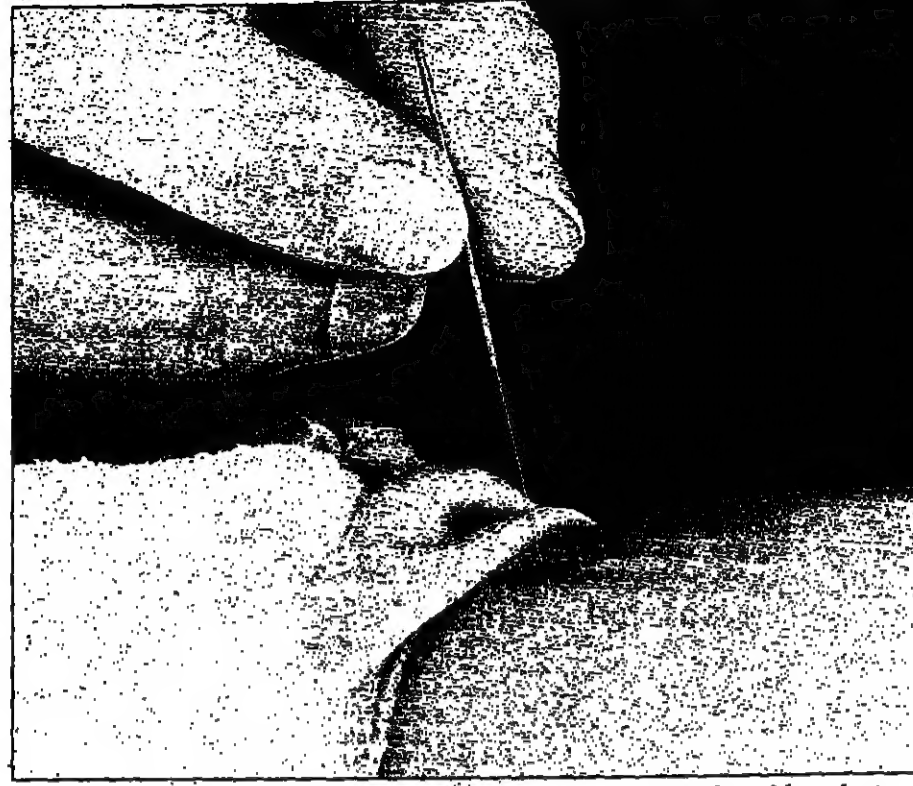
The Prince, who shares an interest in homeopathy with his grandfather, George VI,

has his backache treated by a physiotherapist and an osteopath.

In February last year, the Prince decided to call a seminar of experts in the two kinds of medicine to see what could be done to integrate their treatment in the mainstream. The seminar established a steering group under the chairmanship of his assistant private secretary, Manon Williams, which co-ordinated four working parties looking into how to organise research, regulation, education with training and delivery of an integrated service.

The Prince paid for the King's Fund, an independent think-tank on health policy, to examine the issue. Its report, published yesterday, sets out the issues to be explored at a conference next summer, that will aim to set a timetable for integrating the two streams of medicine.

Integrated Healthcare: A Way Forward for the Next Five Years The Foundation for Integrated Medicine, 83 Kingsway, London WC2B 6SD; £10



Acupuncture, one of 14 disciplines that is becoming more popular with patients

Woman 'fought thief who tried to snatch Rolex'

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A STUDENT described in court how she fought back when two women, tricked their way into her home, punched her and tried to steal her £2,000 watch.

Aphrodite Kefalea, 24, a finance student, wrestled Nathan Martin to the ground and held on to him after he punched her in the face in an attempt to escape. Southwark Crown Court was told. Martin and an accomplice who escaped allegedly visited Ms Kefalea's flat in South Kensington after seeing her advertisement offering the ladies' Rolex Oyster with a champagne diamond dial for £2,800.

Mr Martin, 19, of no fixed abode, denies theft and assault with intent to resist arrest and says he had taken no part in the theft.

Ms Kefalea bought two of the watches from Watches of Switzerland for £3,088 three years ago.

The jury heard that Mr Martin and his accomplice arrived at the flat on July 24 this year carrying an envelope with "£2,500" scrawled on the outside and with a window showing that it contained cash. They told her they had the money and wanted to do a deal for the watch, it is alleged. However, Roger Smart, for the prosecution, told the jury:

"We say the envelope was dummed up to make it look as if it contained £2,500. What it actually contained was one £20 note padded out behind with old newspaper."

After looking at the watch, the accomplice told Ms Kefalea that he needed to have the watch checked out at his shop in the Portobello Road area, the jury was told. The second man put the Rolex in his pocket while Mr Martin is alleged to have waved the envelope at the student and shouted: "This is my money. We have got the money."

Both men moved towards the door and, as the accomplice fled down the stairs with the watch, pursued by Ms Kefalea's boyfriend, she grabbed hold of Mr Martin by his shirt collar.

She told the jury: "He was struggling to get away and then he turned to me and said, 'Let me go otherwise I'll punch you.' But I wouldn't let him go and so he gave me a punch on the right cheek."

Despite being dazed by the blow she again gave chase, grabbed the envelope and held on to her assailant. George Leonidakis, her boyfriend, came to her aid after failing to catch the accomplice and blocked the defendant's escape, the court was told.

The trial continues.

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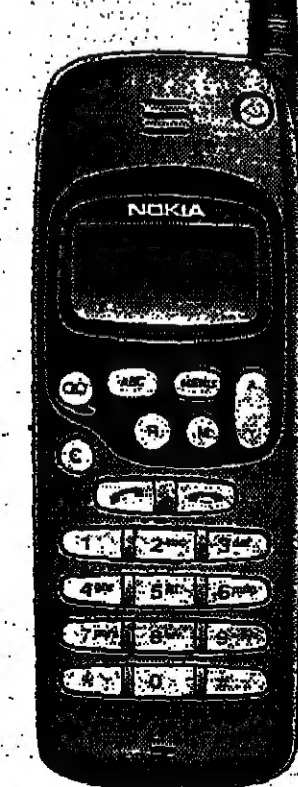
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Judge faces his third drink-driving charge

Dismissal calls follow two previous convictions, writes Frances Gibb

A JUDGE charged with his third drink-driving offence faced calls yesterday that he should be sacked and jailed.

Judge Angus MacArthur, 55, has been convicted twice of driving with excess alcohol and on the last occasion he was warned by the Lord Chancellor that it was his final chance.

He was stopped and breathtested last week when his car and another vehicle were involved in a minor accident shortly after 9am in a city centre street. Judge MacArthur was charged with drink-driving after being held in custody by Cambridgeshire police for nearly two hours and will appear before magistrates in Peterborough next month.

Maria Cape, a spokeswoman for the Campaign Against Drink Driving, said yesterday that, if the judge was convicted, he should be sacked and jailed for his disgraceful behaviour. "It appears he's a danger to himself and a dan-



Judge MacArthur gave breathtest after crash

ger to everyone else. He's an accident waiting to happen," she said. "He's broken the law not only twice but, if it is proved in court, three times. He should not be sitting in judgment of other people."

"It should be mandatory that he is forced to resign or is sacked and I think, if he's

convicted, he should be given a jail sentence to send out the right message that we are not going to accept this sort of behaviour from a person in his position."

Judge MacArthur, from Stamford, Lincolnshire, was first convicted of drink-driving in 1985, a year after his appointment to the county court circuit. Four years ago he was fined £3,000 and disqualified from driving for two years after he was convicted of being more than two and a half times over the legal limit.

The Lord Chancellor, then Lord Mackay of Clashfern, let Judge MacArthur off with a reprimand after the second offence and decided against removing him from office on the ground of misbehaviour, but warned him that any repetition of his behaviour could cost him his job.

A statement then said: "The Lord Chancellor has told District Judge MacArthur that he takes a very serious view of his

conduct. Lord Mackay expects members of the judiciary to observe standards of behaviour in both their private and professional lives which would not undermine public confidence in them."

The statement added: "Lord Mackay views a conviction for drink-driving as cause for him to consider exercising his statutory powers to remove a judge from office on grounds of misbehaviour."

"On this occasion he has decided not to exercise those powers. However, the Lord Chancellor warned District Judge MacArthur that, should there be any repetition of his behaviour, he would clearly have to consider invoking his powers of dismissal."

Tony Burnley, for Cambridgeshire police, confirmed that Judge MacArthur had been arrested. "Following a breathtest, he was charged with driving with excess alcohol and has been bailed to appear before Peterborough magistrates," he said.



My other plane is an Airbus: Flight Lieutenant Ian Black, who flies for the Royal Auxiliary and Virgin

Virgin pilot is a part-time fighter

By Philip Davies Broughton

FOR the first time in 40 years, the RAF is letting one of its reservists get his hands on a frontline jet fighter. Not that Flight Lieutenant Ian Black of the Royal Auxiliary is ill-suited to taking the controls of a Tornado F3. He is a retired RAF pilot whose day job is flying Airbus for Virgin.

There have been no reserve fighter

pilots since the Royal Auxiliary Air Force flying squadrons were disbanded in 1957. The RAF now hopes to have spare pilots it can call upon to boost numbers in times of crisis.

Flight Lieutenant Black, 38, who will be based at RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire, was a pilot for most of his 18 years with the RAF before leaving in February. He said: "I am delighted to be the first of the new Few. The aim is to

determine whether Auxiliary pilots and navigators can successfully augment frontline squadrons."

With the RAF he patrolled over the Falklands, Iraq and Bosnia in Mirages and Tornados. But he says that piloting airliners can be just as taxing. "Landing in New York in midwinter, on snow and ice, buffeted by winds, with hundreds of passengers behind you is not easy."

Older workers are at their best in the morning

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

OLDER people work more effectively than their younger colleagues in the mornings, according to a new study. The over-47s apparently wake up earlier and are more alert before midday.

However, their early enthusiasm for work tends to fade by the afternoon, Tom Reilly, from John Moores University, Liverpool, told a conference on ageing at the British Medical Association in London. There is usually a "post-lunch dip" when older people feel like a snooze.

Clever employers could make use of that pattern by scheduling older people for early shifts and bringing in younger ones in the afternoons and evenings, he said.

A report of the study in *Occupational and Environmental Medicine* magazine also found that jet lag affected older people worse. It suggested that, if they had to take crucial business decisions after long-haul flights, important meetings should be rescheduled to a time when jet lag was likely to be minimised.

Tim Carter, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine at the Royal College of Physicians, said that, for

the vast majority of jobs, age should not be a factor in choosing employees.

"There aren't many rational reasons why you shouldn't employ someone at the older end of working life rather than the younger end," he said. Supermarket and do-it-yourself chains were increasingly preferring to employ older people, because they were better at customer care.

Dr Graham Sutton, of the Nuffield Institute for Health, said older people had organised minds, and "the knowledge of how to do things that isn't written down". They also adhered to ethical standards from which a company might have drifted.

That probably explains why younger managers sometimes want to get rid of them, but if they can work together, then it is generally good for the firm," he said.

Sir Richard Doll, the doyen of epidemiologists, who is still actively employed at 84, told the conference that the best cure for old age was to go on working and looking forward to good holidays. Any idea that there was an elixir of youth was a will-o'-the-wisp, he said.



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Labour rebels risk expulsion

Four MEPs are refusing to toe the party line over PR for European elections. **James Landale reports**

FOUR Labour Euro-MPs are today expected to defy Tony Blair and risk expulsion from the party for their repeated public criticism of new internal selection procedures for the next elections to the European Parliament.

Party whips have given the rebels until 3pm to promise to abide by a new code of conduct that will ban them from talking to the media about the issue. If they refuse they face disciplinary action.

Yesterday Ken Coates (North Nottingham and Cheshire) and Hugh Kerr (Essex West and Hertfordshire East) said that they would not sign up to the code of practice. Alex Falconer (Mid-Scotland and Fife) said he was seeking clarification and Michael Hindley (Lancashire South) was out of the country.

The four have condemned the selection procedures being planned by the party under the new system of proportional representation (PR) for the 1999 European elections. Details of the new arrangements

have yet to be announced, but Britain will be divided into 12 regions returning MEPs in proportion to the number of votes cast. Voters will choose a party rather than a candidate.

The rebels fear that party chiefs will use their new-found control of the closed party lists to purge "old Labour" MEPs from the Strasbourg Parliament. They believe that candidates identified as old Labour will be placed low down on the lists, below younger, new Labour candidates, greatly reducing their chances of being re-elected. They also object to being told to remain silent.

The code, agreed last month by the national executive and sent to all 62 Labour MEPs, says that they should support the party's manifesto plans for PR "and no member shall give statements to the media about any aspect of the party selection procedures which are a matter for internal party discussion and decision".

Mr Coates said this breached European Parliament rules, which say that



The four MEPs opposing the new code, from left: Ken Coates, Hugh Kerr, Michael Hindley and Alex Falconer

MEPs should be able to "exercise their mandate independently". He has persuaded Jose-Maria Gil-Robles, President of the European Parliament, to set up an inquiry. Labour chiefs deny that the code breaks any rules.

Mr Coates said: "I am not going to sign up to the code. I just don't recognise its legitimacy. It is not up to a political party to instruct its members whether to talk to the press about proportional representation or not."

Mr Kerr said: "We have got no intention of abiding by the

code." Mr Falconer would not reveal his intentions, but repeated his attack on the code, which he said was "draconian intrusion" into his civil liberties.

In a letter to Mr Coates, Tom Sawyer, Labour's general secretary, insisted there was no question of gagging MEPs but said the code was "only trying to assist the good working relations between members and within the party".

Simon Murphy, Labour's Chief Whip in Strasbourg, wrote to the four MEPs yesterday urging them to toe the line

or face "the commencement of disciplinary measures". This could include withdrawing the party whip, suspension or even expulsion.

Wayne David, leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party, pulled out of a planned meeting with Mr Coates yesterday after the rebel MEP insisted on having a witness present. Mr David publicly dissociated himself from Mr Coates's position and insisted that the code of practice was sensible.

"If Ken Coates cannot bring himself to abide by the code of

practice, perhaps he should not be a member of the Labour Party," Mr David said. "His views are way out of step with today's Labour Party."

Edward McMillan-Scott, leader of the Tory MEPs, said that Labour was "spinning out of control" in Europe. "Labour's code of conduct not only reveals the control-freak instinct of Tony Blair and Peter Mandelson but also is completely unworkable," he said. "Of course Labour MEPs are going to talk about PR for the Euro-elections... they are talking about little else."

Downing St can help to show who is saying what

BY ALL means shoot the messenger, or make him (hardly ever her) a public figure. But, please, don't believe it will make much difference to the activities of the ludicrously titled spin-doctors — who generally have neither the subtlety nor the professionalism that the term implies.

Whenever a story goes seriously awry, there is usually a call for the replacement of the lobby system by White House-style, on-the-record news conferences. Not only is this a naive view of what happens in America, but it also confuses the regular collective briefings by the Prime Minister's press spokesman with the activities, including unattributable contacts, of lobby journalists at Westminster.

Whatever the format of Downing Street briefings, journalists will always gather information on an unattributable basis. This enables politicians to talk more freely than when they are publicly on-the-record and journalists to provide greater insights. Delane, the great Editor of *The Times* in the mid-19th century, had close, and mutually beneficial, contacts with Palmerston, while later Prime Ministers have regularly complained of leaks to the press (and have often been guilty themselves). Accurate accounts of the Attlee Cabinets were later traced to the weekly teas which the wife of Sir Stafford Cripps, the Chancellor, had with a Sunday columnist.

Of course, an unattributable system is open to abuse. A spokesman, or a minister, floats an idea which can be formally denied. In opposition, Labour became adept at offering such "deniable" spin on speeches and policy initiatives which went well beyond what had been formally announced.

The absence of direct attribution can also be exploited by lazy or inventive journalists to exaggerate the significance of a story, and importance of the source. A senior minister or official can become a term of art rather than formal hierarchy. A marginal figure can be presented as someone close to Tony Blair. That is the "problem" which Alastair Campbell, the Prime Minister's press spokesman, is seeking to address. The nature of the regular

Downing Street briefings has anyway changed and they are now attributed to either Downing Street sources or the Prime Minister's spokesman, rather than previous much vaguer phrases. In practice, Mr Campbell, like his immediate predecessors, already treats the sessions as on-the-record. A further shift to the American practice of naming the spokesman and even perhaps producing transcripts of daily briefings is desirable, but would not be a revolution.

Moreover, as in America, unattributable contacts would continue on an individual basis between ministers, their advisers and the media. A change in the attribution of Downing Street briefings would not have prevented the confusion of recent weeks over government policy on the single currency, though it might have given greater authority to official denials of stories inspired by unnamed sources.

During nearly three years

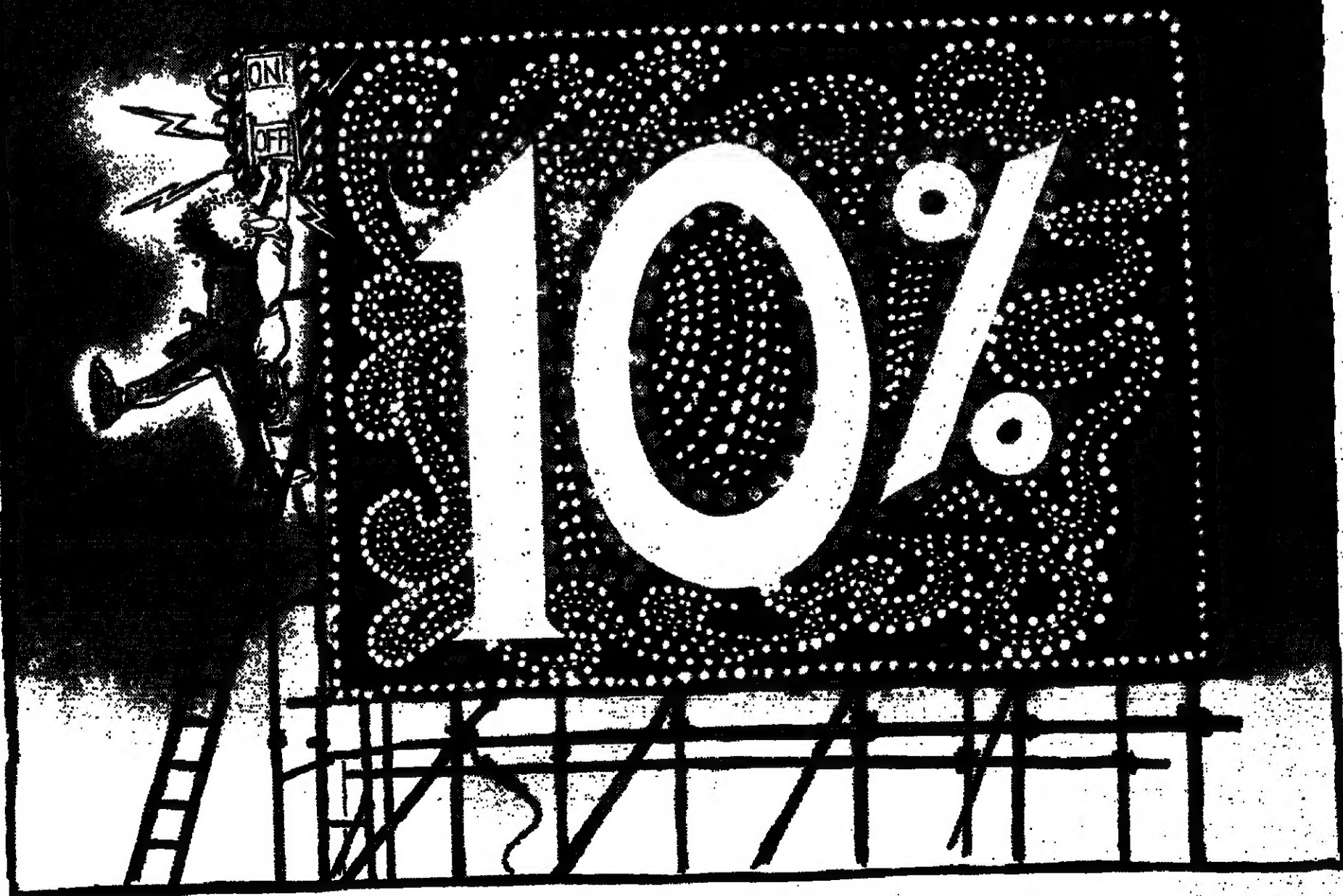
**RIDDELL
ON POLITICS**

in America during the Bush era, I was struck by how similar the two systems really are. On revisiting Washington last weekend, I read political stories in the main papers full of references to unnamed senior White House or administration officials. James Baker, the former Secretary of State, once appeared as himself, a senior State Department official and an administration source during a single briefing.

What matters for readers is to know the weight and legitimacy of a story. Is it an authorised leak by a minister, an exercise in informal, and deniable, kite-flying, or merely informed, or semi-informed, speculation by a journalist? We have seen all three recently. Although there will never be a world where everything is said on the record, there is scope to tighten up attribution in Downing Street and the main departments so that journalists are forced to be more disciplined and less concerned with "spin", so readers know who is saying what.

PETER RIDDELL

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When you die don't put your family through HELL

Villagers relive terror of night massacres

The army may not be perpetrating the attacks, blamed on fundamentalists, but does little to stop them, Anthony Loyd reports from Bentalha

THE teacher seemed to collapse as he bent down beside the verge. He stopped flapping his arms distractedly and instead folded them across his chest like batwings and his face jerked towards the black splashes of blood up the side of the wall.

"This is where Randa landed," he said quietly. "They caught her on the balcony of the second floor, cut her throat, and threw her off the edge. She was six years old, my daughter's friend. Look at this..." He produced a passport-size photograph from his wallet. It showed a blonde-haired child smiling awkwardly at the camera.

"I keep it to remember her by. She spent a long time staying with us. She wasn't the only one to die in this building. Four families had sheltered here that night. All were slain. The dead in this house alone could be counted in dozens."

The wind howled down off the Chrea mountain range behind him, spinning small dust devils and torn plastic bags across the earthen alleyways of Bentalha, an Algerian village.

The bleak poverty of the place only added to the misery of the scene. Ragged, anonymous children scurried through the burnt-out houses, and the dried pools of blood, the smell and flies suggested that only a token effort had been made to clear up after the massacre there four weeks ago.

It was a relatively modern brick settlement for 2,000 peasant farmers and their dependants until last month when a group of up to 150 armed men entered it at midnight.

"For four and a half hours they moved through the village at will, killing everyone they could," said the teacher, Ali. "I ran out when I heard the first shots and saw a group of about four or five of them walking towards my house."

They were dressed in long chemise shirts and cloaks, and some wore scarves wrapped around their faces. Not all of them had guns. Some just had knives and axes. I ran back inside and gathered my wife and five children. A neighbour was firing at them from his roof and we escaped to his house."

All was lucky. His neighbour was one of the men known locally as a "patriot", a civilian armed by the Government as part of a local defence team to guard against the depredations of fundamentalist terrorists based in the nearby mountains. The patriot had a lot of ammunition

They caught her on the balcony, cut her throat, and threw her off. She was six

booty. "It was the second tragedy I had suffered in a month," Ali added.

"Three weeks previously the village of Sidi Rais had been raided in a similar way. I teach at the primary school there. So when I turned up to work one morning I found half my pupils had been killed. Then I lost my neighbours."

I had already seen Sidi Rais. Its catalogue of survivor's horror stories was almost identical to that of Bentalha: mutilation, beheading, burning, evisceration. One man told of having seen his two-year-old daughter thrown from a rooftop before his wife had her throat cut in front of him.

The terrorists had tried to do the same to him, their knives cleaving through his hand as he put it up to protect his throat, before crawling away to escape.

Two of the agricultural villages sitting on the Mitidja plain south of Algiers 15 miles away, Bentalha and Sidi Rais had found themselves in a template of land that has become known as "the Bermuda triangle" to residents in the capital.

As the six-year-old Algerian war has progressed it is this zone of territory, at the foot of the Chrea, that has borne the brunt of massacre and atrocity, as the government forces battle with Islamic guerrillas.

The war began in 1992 after the incumbent secular Government of President Zouari cancelled the second round of elections which the Islamic Salvation Front, the FIS, was poised to win. Since then a shadowy guerrilla war has cost over 70,000 lives in fighting between the government forces and the armed wing of the FIS, the AIS, until a splinter group, the GIA (Armed Islamic Group), emerged as the newest and most vicious terror group, whose continuing atrocities



The agony of Algeria: women weep after attackers butchered up to 200 people in Bentalha, a southeastern suburb of the capital, Algiers

shamed even the AIS into a ceasefire last month.

The Government's version of events is simple. The GIA, a fundamentalist faction armed and indoctrinated by Sudan and international terror organisations, is carrying out night-time massacres as part

of a desperate last-ditch attempt to win support through fear. Cornered in their mountain refuges by a revamped government army, the presidency insists, as it has done for years, that the guerrillas are a spent force on the edge of defeat. The reality is that the

Government has little real support anywhere in Algeria, and has conducted itself with scant regard for human rights. Amnesty International reports testify to a litany of detentions without trial, torture, summary execution and "disappearances". Ironically

the majority of massacres seem to occur in areas where support for the Islamists is strongest. Though it seems unlikely that the army are perpetrating the bulk of these killings themselves they do little to prevent them.

Sidi Rais was little over a mile from the nearest army barracks. In spite of all the gunfire and burning it took troops three hours to reach the village. "There are good reasons for that," a captain told me coldly. "But it is better we do not discuss them now."

Four murdered in mosque

Algiers: Gunmen yesterday shot dead a candidate for an Islamist-leaning party running in local elections, party sources said. Three supporters of the Movement of a Peaceful Society (MPS) also died in the shooting inside a mosque in the remote el-Oned province.

About 15 million Algerians are eligible to vote in tomorrow's polls to choose members of 1,500 local and 48 provincial councils. Nearly 80,000 candidates are running.

The murdered MPS politician is the ninth candidate in

these elections to be killed. No group has claimed responsibility but the Government blames Muslim rebels for the deaths.

The MPS had to change its name and modify some of its policies earlier this year in line with a law banning the use of Islam in politics. It is now a junior partner in the Government of President Zouari.

The municipal elections are the first local polls since the outbreak of a Muslim insurgency in 1992. The Algerian Army and security forces have been mobilised to pro-

tect the 70,000 voting precincts.

An armed group also killed five farmers who were working in their fields, hospital sources said yesterday. A group of about ten attackers cut the throats of four farmers and killed the other near Lalaoun, a village 92 miles east of Algiers, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Security forces uncovered three bomb-making operations and seized weapons allegedly belonging to Islamic militants near the town of Tlemcen. (AP / Reuters)

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Danish nurse accused of murdering 22

A FORMER nursing assistant at a private old people's nursing home in Copenhagen was yesterday charged with the murder of 22 of its residents by administering overdoses of pain killers.

The 32-year-old woman — who cannot be named — is alleged to have murdered 15 women and seven men, aged 65 to 97, between August 1994 and March this year, Kurt Jensen, the Chief Inspector of the Copenhagen criminal police unit, said. It is believed to be the highest mass killing by an individual in Denmark's history.

She was also accused of fraud and theft to a value of £10,000 and of unlawfully dispensing a prescription drug, a morphine substitute known locally as Ketogan, as well as systematically milking money from patients' accounts using their bank cards.

Danish law makes no distinction between murder and manslaughter and police, in statements, used a term that translates as "active euthanasia", implying that they considered the deaths could be the result of mercy killings.

In tears, the woman, publication of whose name is banned under Danish law, pleaded not guilty at Copenhagen City Court. She said: "I had always given medication to ailing residents in accordance with doctors' prescriptions."

Police suggest deaths could be 'mercy killings'

Christopher Follett reports

Only in "emergency cases" had she administered medication herself.

A 50-year-old female doctor at the home was charged with accidental killing and gross negligence in the case.

Police uncovered the killings during a fraud investigation at the home, where they heard talk of active euthanasia and mercy killings. A police statement said that the nursing assistant, who worked at the home in the capital's West End from June 1994 until being dismissed in March, was arrested on Monday.

During the investigation residents told police of an unusually high death rate on the floor where the accused worked. They gave as an example the year 1995 when 14 residents died in the assistant's charge. On another floor, with people of similar age and physical condition, there were only three deaths.

In Vesterbro, a working-

class district of Copenhagen, the nursing home now has 76 residents plus a staff of about 100. Its name was being protected by the court, but Ib Schultz, its director, said residents and employees had been deeply shocked not only by the arrest, but also by what he called a media invasion.

Pia Jensen, 58, who lives next door, asked: "How is it possible that no one noticed anything at all for three years, and how did the doctors sign the victims' death certificates without turning a hair?"

Danish healthcare officials are worried that the case could further erode a flagging confidence in local care for the elderly. Erik Lehm, president of Denmark's National Association of Senior Citizens' Homes said: "Trust in the system for caring for the elderly has been badly shaken by this horrible affair."

"Active euthanasia is prohibited by law. We must remind administrators to be on the lookout for all suspicious deaths."

The Copenhagen nursing home toll is far from the highest of its kind. Austria was shaken in 1989 by revelations that care staff killed at least 40 residents of a Linz nursing home. In 1983 the former head of a Norwegian institution in Trondheim was convicted of taking the lives of 22 patients.



The 32-year-old care assistant who is charged with killing patients at an old people's home arrives at court in Copenhagen yesterday. She was also accused of fraud and theft.

Police search for victims in Belgian 'house of horrors'

FROM CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS

BELGIUM faced up to its dark side again yesterday as police came under fire for failing to take swifter action against a Protestant pastor suspected of murdering his two wives, four of his children and other women.

The discovery of human bones and suspicious slabs of deep-frozen meat in the Brussels home of Andras Pandy, a Hungarian-born divinity teacher, has touched a raw nerve in a country still numb from the crisis over the authorities' failure to act against paedophile killers.

Mr Pandy, 71, dubbed by the media "Belgium's Fred West", is being held on charges of killing members of his family in the late 1980s or early 1990s.

Yesterday police were digging in a house in the bleak Molenbeek district in search of more remains.

As well as allegedly killing his wives, two sons and two daughters, Mr Pandy is suspected of luring women to Belgium by advertising for a third wife in Hungarian newspapers. Agnes Pandy, his 39-year-old daughter, told police that at least 20 women responded to the appeals.

Police are also investigating the death of an aunt, whose ashes were found in an urn in one of his three Brussels houses, and reports of the birth of a child through an alleged incestuous relationship. Four of Mr Pandy's eight known children are still alive.

Investigators yesterday denied that there had been any negligence in their handling of the affair, one of hundreds of cases of unexplained disappearances re-opened a year ago after the scandal over Marc Dutroux, the paedophile killer of Charleroi. In another case that spurred outrage, the body of a Moroccan girl, who was found in the cellar of a petrol station. Her alleged killer, now in jail, had been questioned at the time and released.

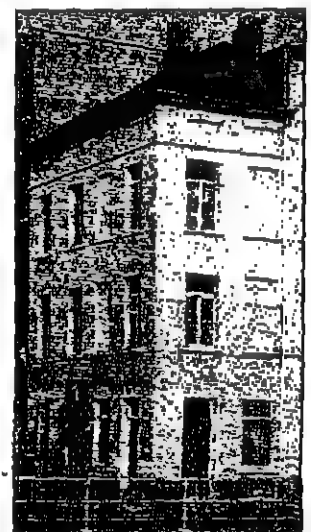
It emerged yesterday that

police had questioned Mr Pandy, who moved to Belgium in 1957, after receiving reports several years ago of the disappearance of his wives and four of his children. They dropped the case after he convinced them that they were in the Americas by showing them letters purporting to come from them. Material for forging postmarks was found when investigators went to Mr Pandy's house on Saturday.

Commentators asked yesterday why police had not earlier searched the house, where, with the help of dogs, they quickly found bloodstains, the frozen meat and human bones under the floor.

Questions were also asked about the indifference of neighbours and acquaintances who reported nothing suspicious as Mr Pandy went about his alleged business.

A parliamentary inquiry into the Dutroux affair revealed gross incompetence among police and magistrates, an impression reinforced this week in the continuing inquiry at which officers squabbled over who was responsible for halting an inquiry that could have led to his arrest before he kidnapped his first two victims.



Pandy's house where human bones were found

EU spirit to cheer Swedes

SWEDEN'S drinkers are preparing to raise their glasses to Europe, despite widespread discontent with European Union membership (Roger Boyes writes). The European Court of Justice in Luxembourg may tilt the scales by ruling tomorrow against the country's state monopoly on alcohol sales.

The queue outside Systembolaget shops — grey, forbidding places with artificial flowers the sole window display — has become a feature of Swedish life. From Monday to Friday, within strict shopping hours, all hard and not-so-hard liquor is sold.

Those aged below 25 years have to show identity cards, and anyone with alcohol already on the breath is turned away.

Czechs hark back to communist rule

CZECH people are increasingly dissatisfied with the Velvet Revolution and bumpy road to capitalism: 77.7 per cent now see merits in the communist system and one in four wants the old system back.

A series of opinion surveys shows that it is not only the present system that the 1989 revolution in Prague was widely praised as a model of transition from bankrupt communism. The divorce from Slovakia in 1993, moreover, gave the Czechs a sense of privilege and prosperity. The Czechs are among the front runners for European Union and Nato membership and Prague has become one of the main tourist magnets of the Continent.

Yet the mood has turned sour. Only 44 per cent now approve of developments since 1989, according to the Centre for Imperial Research. Six months ago 52 per cent ap-



Nostalgia increases amid disappointment with transition to free-market economy, writes Roger Boyes

proved. Another poll, conducted by the Institute of Public Opinion Research, showed 26 per cent approval for the new system — and 25 per cent said they longed for the old days.

The most revealing findings, in a third survey by the Factum Opinion Institute, had 43 per cent declaring that socialism was "no tragedy". Czechs questioned by Factum praised the improved travel opportunities and freedom of expression, but said they missed a free national health system and education, subsidies for farmers and public transport.

The positive aspects of communism were acknowledged by 77.7 per cent of Czechs. A

typical comment recorded by the pollsters was, "what is the point of freedom if I don't have a job?". Others complained about the rising crime rate, the breakdown of social solidarity, materialistic attitudes and the unthinking shift of allegiance from Moscow to Washington. Critical voices were heard not only from those on the Left, but also the far right.

The Czechs are evidently more pessimistic than their neighbours. In Poland a recent poll showed that only 19 per cent would rather live under the old system, and 73 per cent expressed satisfaction with the present democratic order.

The basic reason for the

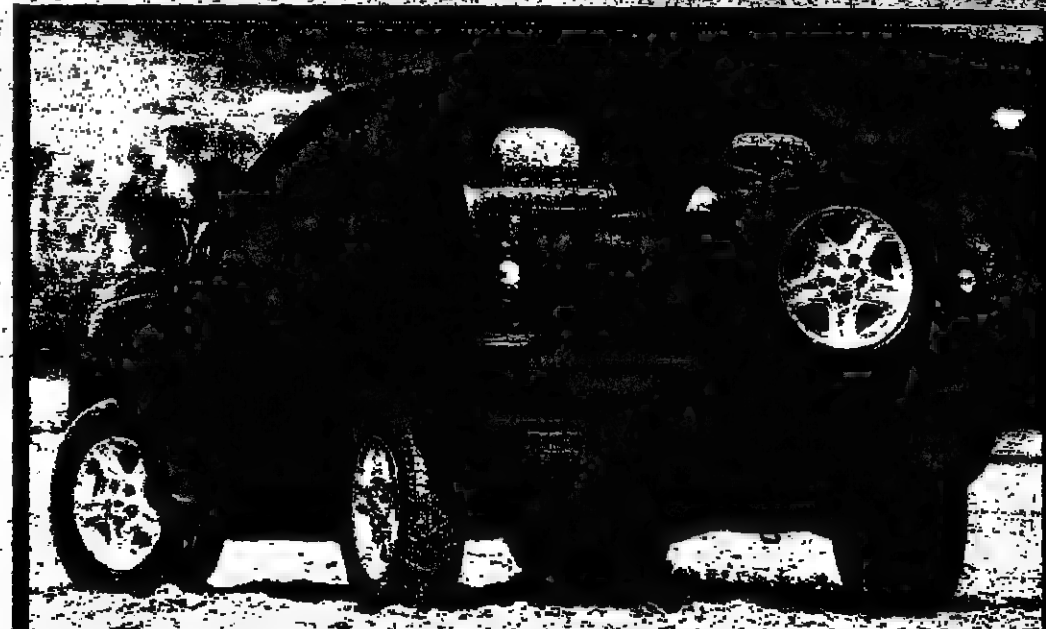
Czech discontent is the dashed expectations that the strict monetarism and free market commitment of Vaclav Klaus, the Prime Minister, would lead to general prosperity. Much confidence has sapped from the Czech economy in the past year.

Bishop Vaclav Malý, once a prominent dissident, blames the mood swing on a lack of action against old communists. Since their misdeeds have not been exposed in

court, many Czechs have forgotten how bad were the bad old days. "People are without orientation because the top communist officials have not been prosecuted, and courts are working too slowly in the fight against corruption," he said.

The Czech Justice Ministry, perhaps trying to counter the criticism, has decided to re-open the criminal case against Milos Jakes, the former Communist Party leader.

FOUR FABULOUS CARS TO BE WON



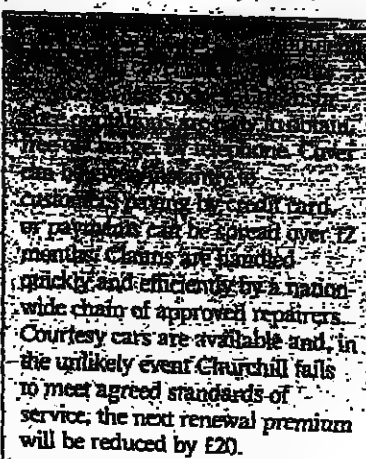
This month *The Times* has teamed up with *The Sunday Times* and Churchill Insurance to offer readers the chance to win one of four exciting cars worth around £20,000 each.

The Lotus Elise is one of the most exciting cars of recent years, technically innovative with fabulous styling and incredible handling. The Freelander, above, is for those who want the style of an off-roader but the practicality and easy driving of a saloon. The VR6 is the raciest Volkswagen: Golf of them all, sexy in black with black leather interior; and the Espace is for serious weekend drivers, diesel-powered for maximum fuel savings and with flexible loading space.

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'Gulag' to fund Solzhenitsyn literary prize

FROM RICHARD BEESTON
IN MOSCOW

THE Nobel laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn yesterday announced the creation of an annual literature prize in his name to help to reinvigorate Russian writing and culture.

The author of some of the most acclaimed works written this century, said that any Russian living and writing in his homeland after the Revolution of 1917 would be eligible for the Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn Literary Prize worth \$25,000 (£15,600).

The move was welcomed last night by the Russian literary world, in spite of misgivings about the reclusive author's likely selection of candidates for the award, who are expected to be drawn from the ranks of Slavophile writers, traditionally hostile to the West.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian literature has suffered the same chaotic transition as every part of society. After years of being fed a strict diet of Russian classics and communist-approved writers, readers have devoured the Western thrillers and romantic novels they were so long denied.

Mr Solzhenitsyn has been



Solzhenitsyn laments demise of traditions

critical of modern Russian society since his return home more than three years ago, after spending 20 years in exile in the West. He has lamented the demise of Russian traditions and rails against the invasion of modern Western culture, which he once condemned as "liquid manure".

In a recent address to the Russian Academy of Science, the author of *Cancer Ward* and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* attacked Hollywood, and in particular Walt Disney, for rewriting

classic works and substituting happy endings for tragic ones.

However, getting his message across has been difficult. Books by the 79-year-old author are hard to find in Russian shops. Few people read the last instalment of his massive historical opus, *The Red Wheel*. His weekly television programme, which attacked nearly every aspect of modern Russian life, was taken off the air through lack of interest and many of his countrymen have dismissed his opinions as those of a cranky old man.

The prize, therefore, should be a good way of drawing attention to his views while promoting the people whose ideals he supports.

Natalya Solzhenitsyn, the author's wife, said in an interview in yesterday's *Knizhnoe Obozrenie* (Literary Review) that the idea of the prize first came to him after he received his Nobel award in 1974.

The first winner will be announced in March after selection by a six-person jury, including experts on Pushkin and Dostoyevsky as well as Mr Solzhenitsyn and his wife. Money for the prize will be drawn from the Solzhenitsyn Fund, which is supported by proceeds from his most famous work, *The Gulag Archipelago*.

John Crowfoot, the secretary of the Russian Booker Prize, which has awarded prizes for the past five years, said that any initiative that encouraged an interest in Russian literature was welcome. "The Solzhenitsyn prize may fill a niche which has so far not been covered by other awards, particularly for nationalist or patriotic writers."

Others took a more sceptical view. Gleb Uspensky, the head of Vagrus, one of Russia's most successful new publishing houses, predicted that the winner would almost certainly receive the award posthumously. "The problem with Solzhenitsyn is that he seems to hate just about everybody in the business."



A 1900 diamond and gold Russian Imperial Crown replica, above, is part of St Petersburg's first-ever exhibition of all the Hermitage's Fabergé collection

De Beers cuts diamond deal to seal cartel

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

DE BEERS, the giant South African diamond cartel, has signed an agreement with Russia's biggest diamond producer giving the Russian company a role in regulating the world market and confirming the Russian diamond-cutting industry's rights.

The deal, which comes after months of wrangling since De Beers ended its Russian contract at the end of last year, represents a significant concession by the South Africans. Russian diamonds have in the past accounted for 25 per cent of De Beers's overall sales.

Under the agreement, signed yesterday in Moscow by Nicholas Oppenheimer, chairman-elect of De Beers Centenary AG, and Vyacheslav Shityrov, President of Almaz Rossii-Sakha (ARS), De Beers will buy a minimum of \$550 million (£340 million) of diamonds a year from the Russian company — 40 per cent of its output. The bulk of the rest will go to Russian domestic markets or be sold within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The terms differ little from the previous agreement in 1990 under which De Beers bought about 95 per cent of the Soviet Union's diamond exports. Now, however, the Russian company gains equal

rights on the regulation of the volume, assortment and pricing of its exports.

A small but unspecified quantity of Russian diamonds will also be exported by a separate state-owned Russian company, Almaz-Juvelirexport, a move hitherto resisted by De Beers.

The agreement also gives the Russian diamond cutting and polishing industry pre-emptive rights in the selection of uncut gems. Some Russian cutting plants will be invited to London diamond sales organised by De Beers. It was not clear yesterday what assurances De Beers had received from ARS on measures to stabilise the onerous supply of Russian diamonds and to prevent frequently substantial "leakages" on to the world market. This had forced De Beers to buy increasing quantities on second-hand markets in Antwerp and Tel Aviv to maintain price regulation.

But Mr Oppenheimer emphasised that it was in the interests of both sides to keep to an agreement that he was sure would contribute to the stability of the market, his hard in recent months by the dollar's strength and the collapse of several Far East currencies.

The year-long agreement takes effect on December 1.

Communists call off challenge to Yeltsin

FROM REUTERS IN MOSCOW

COMMUNIST deputies in Russia's lower house of parliament decided yesterday to drop a vote of no confidence in the Government, Genadi Zyuganov, the party's leader said.

"We believe in real actions. Therefore the faction has decided to drop the no-confidence motion which we initiated," he told reporters after a meeting of communist deputies in the Duma. The party will make an official statement today on its next moves when Mr Zyuganov is

due to give a news conference. The communist deputies had, said the 53-year-old party chief, discussed the Government's response to the threat of the no-confidence vote and a letter from President Yeltsin in which he confirmed various offers of compromise.

The communists proposed the no-confidence vote over the Government's economic reforms. Although Mr Yeltsin made several concessions, he said the Government's overall economic course would remain the same.

Moscow envoy speaks his mind

BY MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE new face of Russia is smooth, efficient, professional and thoroughly at home in the West. But Yuri Fokine, the new Russian Ambassador who arrived in London at the same time as New Labour, will not always give Tony Blair a smooth ride.

Within days of the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow, Russia announced that it was joining France and Germany in a regular triangular summit meeting. That immediately raised questions in London: was Britain being left out? "This is a rather mechanistic

attitude," Mr Fokine replied in faultless affable English. "An Englishman will always remain an Englishman. We shouldn't get into some sort of competition vis-à-vis other European countries."

He said Mr Blair had warmed hearts in Moscow, and struck up good personal relations with President Yeltsin. Anglo-Russian relations were in fine shape, he insisted, based on 400 years of history. Nato is still a cloud on East-

West relations, despite the arrival in Brussels yesterday of the first Russian military representative to the alliance. Mr Fokine warned Britain against assuming that Russia was now happy about the alliance's expansion.

But the focus has changed. With the Cold War over, Mr Fokine's job is less to talk politics than to plunge into the thick of capitalist economics. Russia needs investment, and sees the City as a key to its

future. The ambassador is already at home in the boardrooms of Britain's big banks. He wants the captains of British industry to feel as welcome in Russia, but admits that crime is still a disincentive.

Only one thorn punctures smooth Anglo-Russian relations: the vexatious question of visas. Mr Fokine refused to blame Britain for the series of delay and intrusive questioning of Russian applicants.



Fokine: Russia's new Ambassador to Britain

MILLIONS FACE STARVATION IN NORTH KOREA

This winter may prove to have devastating consequences for the people of North Korea. With the public's support, the Red Cross has ensured that basic medical and food aid has been reaching those who need it most. But supplies are running dangerously low at a time when help is needed more than ever before.

For the third consecutive year, a combination of devastating floods and drought has ruined harvests and destroyed homes. In parts of North Korea children are already having to live on a diet of tree bark and roots. But, without urgent help, many will not survive the bitter cold of the North Korean winter.

Help is needed urgently to avoid this catastrophe. In addition to food and medical equipment, blankets and winter jackets are now desperately needed. You can do something to prevent huge numbers of children, suffering through the winter months. £26 could help feed a family of four for two months.

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Papon saved Jews says trial historian

FROM BEN MACINTYRE
IN PARIS
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE historian who helped to expose the alleged Nazi collaborator Maurice Papon 16 years ago has come forward to claim that the man accused of sending hundreds of Jews to their deaths saved many from the gas chambers.

Michel Bergès told *Le Monde* that recent research had convinced him that the prosecution case was flawed and that M Papon, 87, who is charged with complicity in the Nazi genocide as a senior official of the Vichy regime, was being made into "a political myth".

M. Bergès, who is due to testify in the continuing trial in Bordeaux, was among the first to uncover M Papon's wartime role as secretary-general of the Gironde, but he now says that subsequent research has raised doubts over the extent of his guilt.

"Papon has been made responsible for all the deportations of Jews because he



A lawyer for M Papon shows the sub-machinegun, said to have been a present from grateful Israelis

signed a lot of documents. They have made him into a media creation, clumsily deformed him into someone responsible for the entire mechanism," M Bergès said.

The historian claimed that M Papon had worked with Joseph Cohen, the chief rabbi of Bordeaux, and Pierre Garat, head of the Jewish Affairs Office, to remove names from lists of Jewish deportees.

M Bergès said that documentary evidence, ignored by the prosecution, showed that M Papon had been caught removing 130 names from the

lists in 1943 and had been reported to his superiors in the Vichy hierarchy. He estimated that 400 Jews may have been saved through such efforts.

M Papon, who stands accused of organising the deportation of more than 1,500 Jews, has testified under oath that he helped many people to escape persecution as a senior official of the pro-Nazi regime and never signed deportation orders.

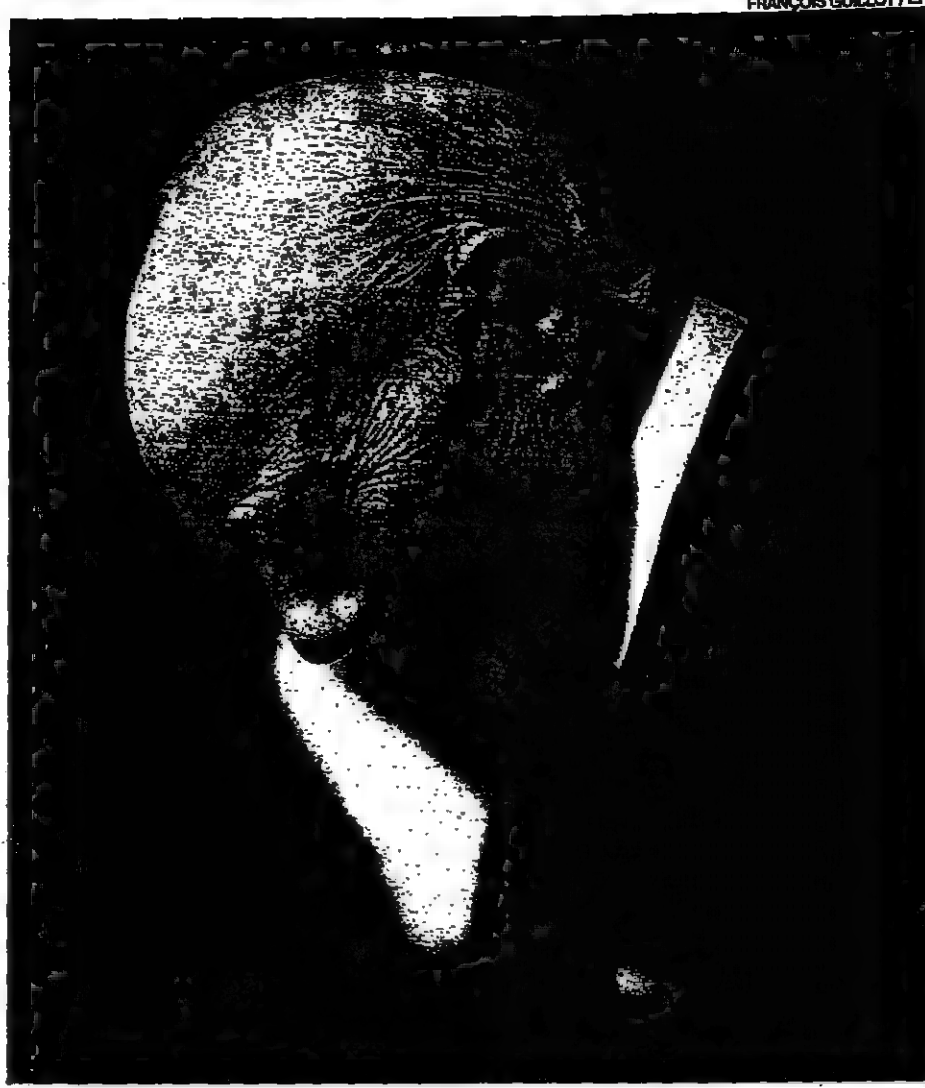
M Bergès has now backed up the claims, insisting that M Papon had no authority to round up Jews and merely counter-signed orders by his

bosses. "I am categorical on this matter and I put my credibility as an analyst on the line. Maurice Papon did not furnish lists of people to be arrested."

Lawyers representing the families of M Papon's alleged victims reacted angrily to M Bergès's assertions, saying he should have waited until he was called to testify. The historian's claims have bolstered the defence case, and added an extraordinary new twist to a trial that even M Papon claimed was a "foregone conclusion".

In Bordeaux, a lawyer for M Papon presented in court yesterday a sub-machinegun allegedly given to M Papon by Israeli officials for helping them in a secret mission.

The weapon was presented to back up a claim by M Papon that he was not an anti-Semite. The lawyer said the gun was given to M Papon "by the Israeli authorities to thank him for services rendered to the state of Israel", including a secret 1948 operation when he was prefect in Corsica.



Maurice Papon leaves a restaurant on his way to the Bordeaux court yesterday.

Blair mulls China visit

BY MICHAEL BRYNOR
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

TONY BLAIR yesterday told Tung Chee-Hwa, the chief executive of Hong Kong, that he was "determined to start a new chapter in Britain's relations with China", and said he was considering a visit to Beijing next autumn.

In a 45-minute meeting at Downing Street described as "warm and friendly" the two reviewed progress in Hong Kong since the handover to China in July. Mr Tung said things were going well and both China and the Hong Kong people were keen to make a go of the new situation.

On his first visit to London since the handover, the Beijing-appointed head of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region spent an hour discussing political and economic developments and briefed Mr Blair on the proposed elections for a new Legislative Council.

The message he received, which will be repeated today in talks with Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, is that Britain is pleased with the way things have gone. The pessimists' predictions of demonstrations, crack-downs and a heavy hand by Beijing have largely failed to materialise.

The Foreign Office said the elections were a step back from those in 1995. But a spokesman added: "If they are free, open, fair and reflect the wishes of the Hong Kong people, that is the important part." □ Hong Kong: Hong Kong said two new Hollywood films - *Seven Years in Tibet* and *Kashgar* - which portray the life of Tibet's Dalai Lama and which have upset Beijing, are within the law and can be shown here. (Reuters)



Tung: Britain happy with his progress

Church at Assisi to re-open

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

PART of the Basilica of St Francis at Assisi is due to re-open at the weekend, a month after the double earthquake which killed four people inside the great 13th-century building and damaged ceiling frescoes by Cimabue and Giotto.

Only the Lower Church will be opened, with a solemn Mass on Sunday. Father Nicola Giandomenico, the bursar at Assisi, said surveys showed that damage to the Lower Church, which contains the tomb of St Francis, had been relatively slight.

Most of the damage was to the Upper Church, where the vaulted ceiling collapsed on September 26, killing two friars and two surveyors. Antonio Padellaro, the former Culture Minister who is in charge of the restoration, said the Upper Church would not re-open until 2000.

Father Giandomenico gave a warning that if there were further strong tremors this week, the reopening of the Lower Church would be postponed. There were several minor tremors yesterday.

This week engineers have been reinforcing the walls of the basilica, and constructing scaffolding inside the Upper Church to shore up the ceiling and enable restoration of the damaged frescoes to begin.

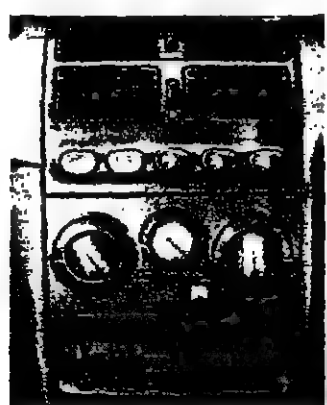
Tung: Britain happy with his progress



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US police turn theft inquiry into a fine art

AN OUTLANDISH tale of art theft — whose cast of characters includes wartime Soviet soldiers, an unsavoury assortment of Azerbaijanis, the New York police, and an apparently dim-witted Japanese businessman — entered its final chapter yesterday at a federal court in Manhattan.

Details of the criminal conspiracy are almost as compelling as the masterworks in question, which include paintings by Rembrandt and Albrecht Dürer, and which are valued at more than \$10 million (£6.5 million).

On Friday, Masatsugu Koga, 60, a Japanese entrepreneur of dubious provenance, pleaded guilty to charges of attempting to sell the stolen paintings, belonging to the Bremen Museum in Germany, where they were last seen in 1943. He was remanded in custody. The New York Times has reported that he has also agreed to cooperate with federal prosecutors.

Mr Koga was arrested last month at a plush suite in Manhattan's Grand Hyatt Hotel, after he had arranged to meet a posse of New York policemen — posing as German art dealers — with a view to concluding a sale of the art. His "portfolio" comprised, among other paintings, Dürer's *Women Bathing*, valued

An international trail links lost Old Masters, writes Tunku Varadarajan

conservatively at \$6 million, and Rembrandt's *Standing Woman With Raised Hands* estimated to be worth about \$2 million.

On his arrest, and faced with the prospect of 15 years in prison, he told police that he had purchased the paintings from employees of the National Museum of Azerbaijan, in Baku.

The transnational plot soon began to thicken. On October 7, police here arrested an Azerbaijani woman, Natavan Aleskerova, 43, after a car chase through the streets of Greenwich Village.

Diplomats at the Azerbaijan Embassy in Washington have protested against her arrest, describing her as a prominent lawyer from Baku. Her own lawyers have gone so far as to say that she is "the Madeleine Albright of Azerbaijan".

However, the police, who found three passports on her and vast quantities of cash in

the car in which she was apprehended, have charged her in connection with the stolen paintings.

They have also issued a warrant for the arrest of her former husband, Aydyn Ali Ibrahimov, a former heavyweight wrestling champion and one of Baku's most feared men. He is reported to be still in Baku.

The story first began to unfold in April, when Mr Koga approached the German Embassy in Tokyo, offering to sell 12 paintings for \$12 million. He claimed that the works belonged to his family and that he needed the money for a kidney transplant.

Suspicious embassy officials sent details of the pictures to Germany and it soon became obvious that Mr Koga's collection was only a part of the scores of paintings lost from the Bremen Museum in 1943.

The records show that they were removed for safekeeping to the Kamzow Castle in eastern Germany, but there the trail went cold.

The museum has long believed that the paintings were spirited away by light-fingered Soviet troops in 1945. That would explain how they ended up in Azerbaijan, which until recently was part of the former Soviet Union.

The German Embassy in Tokyo stalled Mr Koga for three months, during which the elaborate foundations for his arrest were laid.

Mr Koga said that the paintings were kept in a safe in New York, so the city's police and customs were alerted. In July, the Japanese man and German officials agreed that there should be an inspection of the paintings in New York in September. That was when Mr Koga was arrested, and the Rembrandt, the Dürer and four other paintings were recovered.

Six other paintings are still missing, and are believed by police to be in the possession of members of the Russian mafia in the Brighton Beach section of Brooklyn.

Clint 'copied' husky voice of Monroe

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

CLINT EASTWOOD is about to feel the fury of a former lover, thanks to a book deal. According to Sondra Locke, his aggrieved partner of 13 years, Hollywood's most unshakable icon of manliness modelled his screen voice on that of Marilyn Monroe, asked Ms Locke if she had flossed her teeth before having sex with her, and liked to be called "Daddy".

In *The Good, The Bad and the Ugly*, a memoir to be published next month, Ms Locke appears bent on pressing home a reported \$7 million (£4.3 million) court victory she won over Mr Eastwood last year. The book accuses him of waging a silent war against her as their relationship worsened, and of an evil betrayal after his acrimonious exit.

Mr Eastwood persuaded her to have two abortions while fathering two children by another woman without her knowledge, the book claims. It also alleges he bugged her telephone illegally, ended their relationship with a letter from his lawyer and offered no support when she was later stricken with breast cancer.

"For years after the break-up with Clint," Ms Locke writes, "I had struggled for understanding of who he really was behind the mask he had presented to me, and how I had not been able to better anticipate his ultimate, evil betrayal of me."

A spokesman for Mr Eastwood has said that the star had no comment, "and no interest in this book". He will be hard-put to ignore it, however. Ms Locke has embarked on a promotional tour of eight American cities, beginning this week in Los Angeles.

Her book is subtitled "A Hollywood Journey" and it touches on her early career as an actress nominated for an Oscar for her supporting role



Sondra Locke and Clint Eastwood, her partner for 13 years, below. Her book accuses him of a silent war against her and an evil betrayal after they parted

In the 1976 film *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, it describes her battle with cancer and her marriage to a childhood sweetheart who turned out to be gay — but is chiefly a no-holds-barred assault on Mr Eastwood's reputation.

After breathless descriptions of passionate nights together on the *Josely Wales* set, where they met, Ms Locke says her sex life with Mr Eastwood became mundane. "Sweetie, did you floss?" became his signal that he wanted sex, she writes.

The book paints a less wholesome picture of the star, now 67, as a real-life lover than he portrayed in the recent romantic hit *The Bridges of Madison County*. He referred to Ms Locke as "Daddy's little princess", she writes, and "loved for me to call him Daddy".

Ms Locke was 20 when she met Mr Eastwood, then more than twice her age. She shared his jet-set existence for 13 years, appearing with him in *Every Which Way But Loose* and *Sudden Impact*, among other films.

By her account the affair turned sour when she began directing her own films instead of co-starring in his. She sued him last year for what she claimed was a secret deal between him and Warner Brothers to undermine her directing career.



El Niño storms destroy beaches in Rio

BY GABRIELLA GAMINI SOUTH AMERICA CORRESPONDENT

A FLEET of lorries and cranes, manned by hundreds of roadworkers, is being deployed to replace sand that vanished from Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana Beach as hurricane force winds and unusually high waves struck the Brazilian city's coast.

The worst storms to have struck the area in decades are being blamed on El Niño — a warm water current that originates from the Pacific Ocean.

It is thought to be the cause of the climatic upsets, such as floods and severe droughts, that have been reported across the South American continent. "El Niño caused Copacabana to vanish," announced a headline in *El Globo*. Much of the 200-ft-wide sandy beach, one of Rio's main tourist landmarks and stretching along a three-mile coastline, had begun to disappear with high tides and 10ft waves last Thursday.

Huge choppy waves swallowed sand "as though taking it back into the ocean," reported Rio's meteorological office.

The stormy weather worsened over the weekend with 90mph easterly and southeasterly winds that swept over Copacabana beach and blew the remaining sand on to promenades and avenues running parallel to the coast.

"I woke up one morning to see that my favourite beach had disappeared and the ocean came right up to the street," said one local resident. The high tides also engulfed the smaller Arpoador Beach, south of Copacabana, also usually a hub of activity.

Lorry loads of golden sand were yesterday brought in from beaches outside town and tonnes more, which had piled along the promenade walls, was put back in place.

"We have employed every roadworker, and rubbish collector in the district to help to restore our beach to its idyllic self," said Carlos Diaz, who is heading the operation.

Photograph, page 24



Two of the masterpieces recovered by police in a New York sting: a Rembrandt, left, and a Dürer

More Chinese take up religion

Beijing: There has been a dramatic growth in religious belief in China despite repeated crackdowns, the New York-based Human Rights Watch said yesterday (James Pringle writes).

It says in a report that while sects are especially targeted, Beijing also tries to control Buddhism and Islam because

they provide a focus for opposition to Chinese rule in Tibet and Xinjiang. But the group says that since it issued a report five years ago there have been improvements, and despite persecution of Tibetans there has been a slight fall in arrests of those who worship in unregistered churches. The latest report comes in

advance of next week's visit by President Jiang Zemin to America, and after the release of a Beijing document last week saying it promotes, or tolerates, a wide rebirth of religious activities. But the Chinese report emphasises that religious freedom is circumscribed by priorities such as patriotism and ethnic unity.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Bonn expels envoy in drug case

Bonn: Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, yesterday expelled Berenice Weah Reid, the First Secretary of the Liberian Embassy, and her family because of alleged involvement in a cocaine-smuggling ring (Roger Boyes writes). A Briton was also held. The Foreign Ministry confirmed that the Liberian citizen, Neville Reid, drew a loaded gun when police charged into his hotel room and caught him with 17 lb of cocaine. Mr Reid is the husband of the Liberian diplomat.

'Star wars' test

Washington: In a first space use of "star wars" technology a MIRACL laser beam was aimed at a satellite 260 miles away, the USAF said. Seconds longer and the satellite would have been destroyed.

Pirates kill 45

Kuala Lumpur: Forty-five sailors have been killed by pirates so far this year, compared with 26 in the same period last year, the International Maritime Bureau's Regional Piracy Centre said. (AP)

Identity success

Jerusalem: Despite pessimism about the Middle East peace process, Israel has given Yasir Arafat's Palestinian Authority the right to issue its own identity cards in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Rail tragedy

Bombay: Nine people were killed and 60 hurt when a building at a crowded railway station here collapsed. Two others died after being struck by a train as they fled from falling debris. (AP)

Playing safe

Hanoi: Vietnam has banned toy weapons for being dangerous and harmful to children. The ban covers bamboo and plastic: swords, bows, rifles and grenade-shaped cigarette lighters. (Reuters)

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Investment dressing

Fed up with your wardrobe, looks or personality? Try the image consultants who promise makeovers that also save time and money. Juliette Dominguez did

Once the domain of politicians, corporate executives and pop groups, image consulting has a new clientele: the professional middle class. Especially professional New Yorkers, who are united in their quest to look good, save time and, they are assured, "money in the long run". You can pick and choose from a long list of consultants, and from a range of services: do you want a "colour me beautiful" session, a wardrobe clear-out and shopping expedition, a personal shopper, or the consultant who claims that she can make over not just your wardrobe, but you personally, with lessons in etiquette and style? Using a consultant is an interesting concept, if you just want your wardrobe done and

'You've no idea how much junk people keep in their closets'

Subjecting myself to what was bound to be a humiliating experience (my wardrobe is a hodgepodge of mismatched everything), I enlisted the services of the image consultant Pamela Henry, 37. For \$250 she agreed to "do my colours" and rid my closets of any offending articles. She arrived on my doorstep armed with a huge swatch of colours and a determined look in her eye. She has been doing this for five years, and has seen women cry at throwing out beloved but bedraggled items. "You've no idea how much junk people keep in the back of their closets," she says. "My goal is to help to pare your wardrobe down to the essentials, and suggest any missing key items you may need. The aim is that you can go to your wardrobe every morning, and get dressed for work without worrying if you look good."

half my closet. But she was right. I did look "enhanced" by darker colours — blacks and browns and some of the "darker brights" such as fuchsia and burgundy. Henry explained that these all have a blue, rather than yellow, undertone. "I am looking to see how the colours relate to your skin tone, hair colour and eyes," she said. "Your optimum colours will make you look rested and younger, the wrong ones will make you look tired and gaunt. Black is great — it draws attention to your eyes and brings out definition in your lips. Brown and grey bring out a rosininess in your cheeks and the glitter in your eyes. But steer clear of yellow, orange and peach: they make you look green. And the pastels are too light; they just blend away into your face." So far, so good. The colours she was suggesting did make me look better, and, sadly, one of my favourite colours, yellow, really did make me look ill.

Three hours later, it looked like a jumble sale in my bedroom. One half of the room was obscured by an increasing pile of underables — clothes that were either the wrong colour or shape for my "inverted triangle" 5ft 4in frame. Mostly, I agreed with her selection. Many of the items were far too small, or an unbecoming colour. For future purchases, she advised: "You have a great waist, so we want to show that. Wear jackets with some fitted detail, but not too long, as you'll look short. Angled pockets are useful, as that creates the illusion of the waist, and wear trousers with pleats at the front to distract attention from your stomach." All sensible, although pretty obvious, advice. I might not want to emulate Henry's own style, but she was sage enough. It had been a painful experience, but my newly slimline wardrobe did look uncluttered and well coordinated — and what a luxury to have someone else clear my closet.

Next on the list was Dominique Isbeque, 38, a consultant who offers a similar service. Sitting in her salon-like Upper West Side apartment, I was immediately impressed and inspired by her classic Parisian look — an Hermès scarf draped around a smart navy blazer. She looked the part — but then at her price range, she could afford to. Isbeque explained



"Every professional woman juggles three wardrobes: career, cocktail and casual. They all tend to get out of hand"

her philosophy: that this was more than just a change of clothes. "The majority of those who see me are professionals going through some kind of life change. This could be a career change, or they might have been promoted in their job, and need the image to match that. Or it could be more personal, like a change in body weight, or a divorce, and they need to keep control of their image. It is a psychological process, where you're changing your attitude, your perceptions, and how others perceive you."

Isbeque took me in hand, and gave me a colour analysis and consultation (\$175 for 90 minutes) on what best flattered my figure. Both of these echoed exactly what Henry had told me. She offered to go

shopping with me (an extra \$500-\$750) to put together a winter wardrobe. "This expedition would set me back \$3,500, but she assured me: 'I do not have a minimum budget for my clients. But the larger the budget, the greater the potential of having the perfect wardrobe.' She added that a 12-piece wardrobe could be put together for a more limited budget — say \$1,500.

Isbeque argues that after an initial outlay of \$250 for a full consultation (which includes wardrobe clearing) and her additional shopping service, you can "shop and dress with confidence, knowing that you've saved money and time. I suggest that people re-evaluate their personal self and identify every two years."

One of Isbeque's regular clients is Amanda Moore, 48, an international corporate lawyer who consults her at least twice a year. "Every professional woman juggles three wardrobes: career, cocktail and casual. They all tend to get out of hand. Dominique introduces new combinations from pieces I already have, and helps me to discard those that look bad. She reduces my wardrobe to its essence, and my own signature style. Shopping is such a pleasure because you're looking for things in a colour and style that you know will look good. It's investment dressing and saves an awful lot of time."

Those who haven't even time to go to a consultant can always use one of the department stores' personal shop-

pers. Janet Mick, 27, is the director of client services at Henri Bendel in Manhattan. "Most of our clients are busy professionals who like to get in and get out as quickly as possible. Usually, they'll call and describe what they need, and I'll pull pieces ready for their arrival."

A regular client is Donna Whiting, 50, from Kentucky, who recently retired from the family betting business. "I will fly in at least four times a year

to buy that season's wardrobe. My last trip was to buy my winter wardrobe, which was about \$6,000. It does save so much time, and it's great to have that personal attention." If I needed a change of clothes, or a whole wardrobe in a hurry, then this was a simple, cheap (you don't pay for the wear a jacket at the office).

So, how useful is it to employ the services of these professionals? They were spotted on with their advice — but somehow, even if I could afford their services (which I can't), I think I would rather spend the money on clothes. Lavington takes her clients

'Most are going through some kind of life change'

Nigella Lawson



Beautiful reason not to strip

SERIOUSLY: how can anyone now be shocked by the idea of an Oxford undergraduate earning money as a stripper? Modesty is a defunct virtue, informing most people's lives as little as that other superannuated accomplishment, watercolouring. We remain enough of a memory of decorum to enjoy the frisson of surprise. But it's just a mine, not rooted in any moral dismay.

Far from it: those under a certain age would rather admire Melissa Butler for strutting her stuff at the Sunset Strip in Soho. For them, the stripper is not some sleazy figure, but a strong woman who owns her body and is happy with it: a woman who gets what she wants — money and applause — for revealing what she is.

In so far as modern wisdom goes, being a stripper is not about degradation but empowerment. Ms Butler's behaviour chimes so distinctly with the spirit of the age: her earnest defence of her behaviour shows its untrammelled introspection: her actions reveal its narcissistic exhibitionism. Anyway, walking about in hardly any clothes is nothing these days, just high street fashion: but being paid to take them off, that's really modern. This is know-your-price post-feminism writ large (for easy reading).

To be frank, I've often felt rather doubtful about modesty as it is. Too often, it's just vanity. Most people would take their clothes off if they felt they would look good naked. And who wouldn't wear the most minuscule of

microskirts if they had the legs for it?

And Ms Butler so clearly revels in the admiration she gets just for being a woman. She loves the applause she gets for taking her clothes off and feels validated, that other modern buzzword, in a way she never has by her academic success.

There is a great truth behind this, a truth that early British feminists never quite got to grips with: there is something in it for women here, too. Sexual admiration is not just about exploitation and degradation. Feminists in France have never had difficulties reconciling their sexual-political beliefs with the desire to be and be thought attractive. It's our problem.

And from that problem stems all this. Ms Butler was encouraged to develop her prodigious cleverness. I doubt her pretentious was ever thought to matter much, and if it did, only negatively: brains were always more important than beauty.

And so they are. But it serves only to encourage me in my belief that the one thing you have to do is to tell children how beautiful they are — almost until they get bored with it. It's the ones who never felt pretty and have to make sure they are who have such problems.

Not everyone can be a perfect physical specimen, but if you make children feel attractive, they won't need, when they grow up, constant proof that they are, which is surely what taking your clothes off in a room full of gazing men is all about.

Why child safety comes first

IF I WERE the father in the babes-in-the-bath tub case, I might, too, be feeling unhappy. This is the story: a woman lost custody of her children after taking them into the bath with herself and her lover, Lady Justice Butler-Sloss disapproves of that decision. That judge was wrong, she says, and was governed by his instinct.

I don't say that the mother should have lost custody — I don't know all the facts — but surely that first judge's instinct was correct in one aspect. There is something troubling here. The children may not have been at risk of intentional abuse. It might all have been done in innocence. But without the natural constraints of blood, there is bound to be trouble. Just look at the court records.

I know incest exists, but it is the fragmented family that is so unsafe. I am not talking emotionally here. I refer to the physical danger: something goes wrong, and often, when teenage girls are living intimately with men they are not related to, especially when the men are temporary residents. And there can be trouble between "steps", too: more than one friend of mine had an affair with a stepbrother.

It is human nature, for the young to test themselves sexually: the blood family pro-

vides a safe space for this, protected by natural restraints. When these are not in place, who knows what can happen?

Perhaps the judge was wrong to punish the mother — but the law is there to protect children. As his instincts reminded him.

What a rum baba do

ISN'T FASHION cruel? Just as Robert Carrier brings out *New Great Dishes of the World*, which dishes such old favourites as rum baba and prawn cocktail, out comes a cooler, hipper book — from the same publisher — that exalts in the very dishes he did away with. *The Prawn Cocktail Years*, by Simon Hopkinson and Lindsey Buchanan, is, in its own way, homage to *The Great Dishes of the World*, now out of print. If Carrier had just had the first edition reprinted, he might have been in retro-vogue. Instead, his earnestly reworked pages emit a whiff of last year's bad, coriander.

Real food has nothing to do with what's in or out, but since culinary awareness now comes from the restaurant rather than the home, we are hopelessly susceptible to fads. Chicken Kiev, anyone?

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Something rotten in the system

As evidence mounts that there is a crisis in Britain's childcare, Bill Frost examines the facts and tells the story of one victim

THE GOVERNMENT is to set up "hit squads" to investigate council social services departments as evidence mounts of a crisis in childcare. Claims of systematic sexual abuse at children's homes in North Wales, being heard at a tribunal near Wrexham, have deepened public disquiet. There is also concern that anonymity has been granted to alleged paedophiles in return for evidence.

The experts who chair such inquiries say they rarely prevent new tragedies. They claim that many investigations are an expensive waste of time and that recommendations are often ignored. Meanwhile, the young and vulnerable continue to suffer at the hands of those entrusted to care for them.

Even at the age of four, Sean knew that the woman's behaviour was unusual; his mother, who had died only weeks earlier, had never expected him to play such strange and disturbing games. He hated a stranger's hands roaming over his body, but there was nobody he could tell and none of the other boys at the council home seemed unduly bothered by the "games".

For the next 12 years, Sean and his three brothers, all taken into care when their mother died, endured an appalling catalogue of sexual abuse and mental cruelty at the hands of their house mother and other staff. Like other children there, they began to assume that such behaviour was normal, an expression of affection.

Just days after arriving at the home in Essex, where he had been placed by an East London council, Sean was sexually assaulted by his house mother. The memory angers him still. He stares at a point in the middle distance as he recalls the day she stripped him in her room.

"She fondled me first and then attempted to masturbate me. I couldn't understand why this was happening."

As the years passed, Sean came to dread weekends when the children were visited by "uncles" — strangers to him but men known to staff. They would demand sexual favours in return for sweets or other small presents.

"When I was about 12, a male member of staff raped me. I remember that the house mother washed my underwear afterwards, presumably to destroy evidence. By then I was terribly confused, and so were all the other children who had been abused. We had come to regard what happened at that terrible place as perfectly normal, yet instinctively we knew it was wrong."

"The man who raped me thought I was joining their ranks, that I was a willing participant in homosexual activity even though I was barely pubescent. He told me about all the other kids he had abused."

"At that stage you try to rationalise things. You regard the assault as an expression of affection. A little later, while I was still at the home, that changed — I loathed what was happening and saw the attacks as evidence that I was unloved, unlovable, thoroughly worthless."

When he left the home, Sean "lost control". Intelligent and sensitive, he was gripped by rage and confusion.

"I couldn't hold down a relationship. I didn't know if I was homosexual or straight. I didn't know if I wanted to live or die. That climate of abuse made me feel as though I had been poisoned."

"I was disgusted with myself. I couldn't face the real world and attempted suicide a couple of times. It was clinical despair."

In desperation, he decided to travel around Europe and sought therapy when he returned to London a year later. He also decided to "get even" with his tormentors.



Robbed of innocence: abused children, taught to swap sexual favours for sweets and toys, later develop intense self-loathing. Suicides are not uncommon

of course, there have been suicides. We were thrown on the scrapheap — and the abuse heaped on us is being heaped on other children now, as we speak."

Three years ago, Sean, now a young father and relatively at peace with himself, took on the council who "imprisoned" him at the home. He embarked on a campaign to unmask the abusers and bring them to justice.

"This is not just for my own stability, but for all the others abused then, and all those who are being abused now. There is institutionalised cruelty taking place and no one seems to give a damn."

Repeatedly "fobbed off" by the East London borough's social services department, Sean threatened to take his story to the press.

The following day, the director of social services telephoned. I was told that my files had been lost, that the staff I complained of were no longer employed by the council, and that the home had closed. I persisted, and an inquiry was launched which involved the police. It was a waste of time, even though one other person who had been at the home gave corroborative evidence about the rape and the house mother's sexual abuse.

In the end, the Crown Prosecution Service said there was insufficient evidence. The missing files undoubtedly played a part in that decision.

Sean then tried to launch a civil suit, alleging personal injury at the hands of social services staff. However, legal aid, essential for a High Court action, was refused.

Three months ago he made an official complaint to the council about his treatment while in care. As yet, there has been no reply.

"I'm not going away — I will pursue

them for as long as it takes. I'm talking about people who have ruined my whole life, ruined my brothers' lives. This is all about regaining my self-respect, years after they took it from me."

"I want someone to speak up for the children who have been made victims by social services and then betrayed an uncaring system."

Sean's words have an all-too-familiar ring for Allan Levy, QC, who chaired the Staffordshire "Pindown" inquiry in 1990-91. He found that social services staff at four homes in the county had subjected children in their care to degrading punishments.

In the aftermath of Pindown, Mr Levy has little faith in inquiries, particularly when they are carried out by social services departments. He says that an independent Children's Commissioner should be appointed to ensure that the Government is not allowed to slide out of its obligations.

"Have we absorbed nothing over the past 12 years or so of abuse inquiries? No one should be indifferent to cruelty — be angry by all means, but learn from the mistakes of the past and ensure they do not recur."

The Department of Health's social services inspectorate, which investigates claims of abuse, didn't spot Pindown. Where were they? They are good at pointing out defects after the event, but why aren't they making random checks around the country before there is trouble?

"When there are so many blatant scandals, one has to ask why they didn't come to light earlier. What is lacking is a national and independent overview of the way we treat the most vulnerable people in our society."

"There is no point in being reactive when the damage has been done, particularly when recommendations are subse-

quently ignored or forgotten. I am drawn to the conclusion that there is something rotten in the system. The Government has to acknowledge that a long look must be taken at the treatment of children in care, and more money spent to ensure that the mistakes of the past are not replicated. How many must suffer before there is a change?"

Sir Herbert Laming, the man who heads the social services inspectorate, is the first to admit that "everything is not wonderful" in the childcare system. "I am far from sanguine and there must be considerable vigilance. Nevertheless, I am impressed by the courage and determination shown by management in tackling the issues."

Mr Levy, who specialises in childcare issues, finds it hard to give such praise or to be dispassionate about abuse and apparent official indifference. He says the system should not be allowed to fall at such a high human cost, and is critical of

the lack of follow-up to major inquiries. Furthermore, he is "concerned" that the media have been prevented from revealing the names of alleged paedophiles appearing before the current North Wales child abuse inquiry.

The tribunal was ordered by William Hague while he was Welsh Secretary, after Cymru County Council decided not to publish the report of an independent inquiry into allegations of abuse in its children's homes. Some of the most chilling evidence heard by the tribunal has come from beyond the grave: statements made by six men who died after telling police in the early 1990s about abuse and brutality in the Bryn Estyn home in Wrexham were read to the inquiry.

One man said that he had been sexually abused by a housemother, who was later jailed for seven years. "I have never told anyone before about what happened to me," he said. "My wife doesn't know."

NO NAMES RULE

MUCH to the fury of reporters covering the North Wales child abuse tribunal, they have been prevented from naming alleged members of a paedophile ring accused of indulging in a relentless campaign of physical and sexual abuse against children in the care of Cymru County Council. Sir Ronald Waterhouse, QC, the chairman of the tribunal, has threatened the media with High Court proceedings if they print names. Meanwhile, witnesses have claimed that members of the ring used their connections with police and social services to conceal their activities. All the accused have denied the allegations. Sir Louis Blom-Cooper, QC, who has chaired five child abuse and mental health inquiries, takes issue with editors who question the tribunal chairman's decision to grant anonymity. He agrees that the lessons learnt from past inquiries have sometimes been lost because the teams involved are not responsible for allocating the resources needed to implement their recommendations. However, he has no problem with Sir Ronald's decision to gag the press. "The problem seems to me to be that there is nobody in front of the tribunal who is opposing the anonymity ruling — the opposition is solely from the media. It is very difficult for Sir Ronald to order otherwise when all the parties say that this is the only way to get people to give evidence who otherwise might not. The needs of a free press — requiring that people be named when they appear — have not necessarily been frustrated. The witnesses may well be identified when the final report is published."

neither do my parents. And when I think about what happened, I am disgusted. Now that this has been brought back to me and I have relived what that man did, I could kill him for it."

Without full knowledge of the circumstances, it was difficult to comment further on the anonymity ruling made by the tribunal chairman, Mr Levy said. "However, I would hope that the names will be in the report when it is finally published. On the wider question of prevention, though, let's recognise the defects before too many more children and young people are hurt."

"First, let's have independent inquiries and random checks. Then, let's start vetting social services recruits — too many unsuitable people are being hired. Training must be more efficient as well, and managers must be weaned off the principles of the marketplace. Too many executives in social services are more concerned with balancing the books than with the welfare of those their staff are employed to care for."

"The new bosses have no experience of the front line, and that leads to poor supervision. And what has the social services inspectorate been doing? The faults in care highlighted during the mid-1980s are still there."

Sean agrees, although for him such calls come a decade too late. "I want justice, and I have just about come to terms with my pain. But what about all the other little human time bombs being primed? Who is going to care about them if the system doesn't?"

"I am concerned about justice now. But what I want too is prevention. Please don't let any more children endure what I had to suffer."

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Erica Wagner, *The Times*

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Alan Coren



What are the odds Baldrick has an answer to the Balkan question?

I yield to nobody in my admiration for Robin Cook. Anyone able to combine the equally demanding jobs of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and racing tipster for the *Glasgow Herald* is a challenge which, history tells us, did not even cross Palmerston's mind. Deserves every plaudit a grateful nation can throw at him — always provided, of course, that his copperplate billet-doux at the front of our passports will not henceforth offer 11-4 against the bearer being able to pass freely, without let or hindrance and, in the eternally tricky matter of a statesman's private life, he has managed to uphold standards set by no less rigorous a moralist than Michael Portillo himself.

Furthermore, he is by all accounts so eclectic a conversationalist that I am prepared to accept the explanation that last week's controversial aside on the Kashmir problem was no more than a reference to the irritation which understandably strikes after one has looked out 200 quid for a sleek, telegenic pullie only to have it return from its first dry-clean with bobbles all over it. Mr Cook, in short, never puts a foot wrong.

Which is what, no doubt, gave him both the confidence and the courage to rush that foot in where so many of his illustrious predecessors have feared to tread, viz. the Balkans. Faced, so early in his tenure, with the impenetrable miasma which has terminally clobbered many a promising political career, Mr Cook did not hesitate for an instant. He did not muck about. He rolled his sleeves up, and poked his forefinger to the bottom of the drain. He ordered his FO minions, forthwith, to send the stricken Bosnian Serbs a gigantic aid package, consisting of "Only Fools And Horses, Lovejoy, Absolutely Fabulous, The Brittas Empire, Family Ties, One Foot in the Grave, and Blackadder. Clearly, our Foreign Secretary is a man who knows all too well what strikes home."

For what has stricken the Bosnian Serbs is the lack of decent telly. Confronted with an unremitting barrage of regional cultural programmes, many of them repeats, those previously loyal to Banja Luka's SRT TV have fled in their piteous hordes. Unable to take any more wobbly documentaries about well-dressing or donkey enemies or jamjar museums or rural hats, they have taken instead to the streets. They have become box refugees. They do not know which way to turn.

That is because they do not know that a deeply caring champion is about to gallop to their succour. Here is what, announcing his splendid scheme on Monday, Mr Cook declared: "Not surprisingly, the Serbian (sic) people have switched off. We want to encourage them to switch back on, not only so they can enjoy our comedies and get hooked on our soaps, but so they can receive a more liberal political message."

This is not just stirring — possibly immortal — rhetoric, it is exactly what we should expect from a great Government which won power through its burning faith in the cathode, cannily recognising that a public bored witless by an 18-year-old soap opera was not going to pass up the opportunity to switch channels, come what might. No surprise, then, that the great tipster should go rap on Silecom Diplomacy, nor any complaint from us, who so resoundingly put him there to do it.

But, perhaps, a small niggling doubt? Glancing again at the list of video goodies even now winging towards the grateful Bosnian Serbs, might we not question Mr Cook's trust in that political message of his, given the likely composite picture of the country from which it is delivered? A country, that is, patently packed to the gunwales with workshy duckers and divers, incompetent even at the villainy through which they dream of escaping urban blight or rural fossilisation, and rich dysfunctional parasites, legless from booze, coke, and alternative therapies, and venal though inept businessmen, and dangerously sociopathic hoteliers, and woefully disgruntled OAPs — all of them heirs to a long history of mad monarchs, corrupt politicians, evil generals, bent judges, and Baldricks. Then again, it might discourage a few asylum-seekers.

Let us give the Foreign Secretary the benefit of the doubt. Call it an each-way bet.



ANOTHER MINORITY GROUP ARRIVES ON SOUTH COAST IN SEARCH OF A BETTER LIFE

The granddaddy of spin

Mandelson's press paranoia seems to be inherited, says Francis Beckett

Spin-doctors have been at the heart of recent comings and goings over the Government's intentions towards the single currency. Newspapers and rumour mills are full of the briefings and moods of Alastair Campbell (Tony Blair's press secretary) and Charlie Whelan (Gordon Brown's adviser). But the name that is missing is much more interesting. No one has mentioned Peter Mandelson.

Mandelson is one of the most remarkable politicians alive today. Either he brought back his party from the dead, or has made everyone believe he did, which is just as great an achievement. He was probably the first Briton to whom the American term "spin-doctor", which comes from baseball, was applied, though the trade is not new. For at least 80 years, political parties have employed people whose job it was to put a different spin on news stories.

So where has he been these past few days? He still controls government communications. Cynics will suggest he is keeping a low profile so that the odium of EMU confusion will attach itself to Charlie Whelan, with whom he does not enjoy cordial relations. But the truth is likely to be far simpler.

Mandelson's ambition is, and always has been, political. His route to Parliament happened to include a spell of spin-doctoring, and he found he was rather good at it. But now he is like an actor who wants to play Hamlet, and people insist on talking about how good he is in *Coronation Street*.

What sort of politician is he, and how far will he travel? We can get an idea by looking at the remarkable career of his grandfather Herbert Morrison, the architect of Labour's nationalisation programme, because the similarities between the two are striking. Morrison was a workaholic who lived and breathed politics. Like Mandelson, his day always started with the press coverage, and if he felt a newspaper treated him unfairly, he always complained. Like Mandelson, he tried to control his coverage and was over-sensitive to newspaper criticism.

Morrison always understood, as some of his colleagues did not, that public relations was an essential instrument in 20th-century democratic politics. He took care to get to know editors and lobby correspondents, and to become a crucial source of information for them, just as Mandelson has done.

The similarities do not stop with their

attitude to the press. Morrison advocated in the 1930s what his grandson advocated in the 1990s. Labour, he said, would keep its solid working-class support, whatever it did. The task was to bring the middle classes on board. By 1948 the architect of nationalisation was arguing that the nationalisation programme should stop. The parallel with his grandson is exact: after the 1950 election, which Labour won narrowly, he wrote a memorandum for the NEC, which talked of the need to "modernise".

Morrison rose to be Deputy Prime Minister under Clement Attlee. As well as controlling the Government's nationalisation programme, he was one of its chief economic policymakers, and for the last few months of the Government's life he was Foreign Secretary. But the top prize, for which he lusted all his life, eluded him. Instead, he had to serve a Prime Minister with whom he had an awkward and uneasy relationship. Mandelson, on the other hand, "is immensely influential with Blair now, regarded by many as his alter ego", according to John Rentoul in his 1995 biography of Tony Blair.

Attlee and Blair are the only Labour Prime Ministers to have been educated at public schools, but that is where the similarity stops. Blair's instincts and style of leadership are quite different from Attlee's, and make him a much easier person to work with and prosper under. No one could ever have called Attlee a "moderniser" in the sense that Morrison and Mandelson have used the word. Attlee wrote that there is no point in "watering down Labour's Socialist creed in order to attract new adherents who cannot accept the full Socialist faith. On the contrary, I believe that it is only a clear and bold policy that will attract this support."

If Morrison and his grandson worried too much about what the newspapers said, Attlee may have worried too little. James Margach, a lobby correspondent from the 1940s to the 1970s, wrote: "I

have never known the press so consistently and irresponsibly political, slanted and prejudiced" as during Attlee's Government. "The Prime Minister himself was a figure of fun in the press throughout his six years in office."

But Attlee never seemed to notice. When his press secretary, Francis Williams, brought him a particularly unpleasant reference to himself he would grunt: "That so? I suppose they've got to write something. Circulation, slipping, you think? He never looked at the cuttings. He read *The Times* each morning, but only for births, marriages and deaths and appointments: he completed *The Times* crossword; and he read the *Daily Herald* to keep him in touch with what his party was thinking."

Williams explained to his boss that Downing Street must have a Telex so that they would know straight away what stories the agencies were sending out to the newspapers. Attlee asked what good it would do. Williams replied that it would keep the Prime Minister up to date on the lunchtime cricket scores.

The week after the Telex was installed, Attlee looked into Williams's office to ask why his "cricket machine" was ticking out the decisions and subjects discussed at the Cabinet meeting that morning. Williams explained that he routinely briefed the political correspondents. "OK, Francis, I'll leave the show to you. Good work." Throughout his time as Prime Minister there was never a television in Downing Street or Chequers. Even if mobile telephones had been invented, you cannot imagine Attlee passing a mobile through the window of his car to a journalist so that his press officer could pass on the correct "spin", as Blair once did.

Margach recalled one of Attlee's few press conferences. Scheduled to last an hour, it was flagging within ten minutes. The replies Margach remembered were "Nothing in that," "You're off beam again," "I've never heard that, have

you?" and "That idea seems bunkers to me — the Cabinet's never looked at it."

At last Ernest Hunter, political correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, asked: "Prime Minister, we're all stumped. What's number twelve across, two words, seven and six letters?" For the first time Attlee spoke for more than ten minutes, reports Margach. "Didn't the lobby know that the first oblique reference was to Homer, that the fellow who set the puzzle that day likes to pop in Latin and Greek hints to put you off the scent?"

Morrison once visited Attlee at Chequers on a Sunday and asked if he had seen the newspaper stories. Attlee replied that he did not read the Sunday newspapers. "I never know whether to believe him," Morrison said afterwards.

No other 20th-century Prime Minister managed Attlee's grand indifference. Some, including Harold Wilson and John Major, have found press attacks deeply hurtful. Stanley Baldwin was provoked into a fierce counter-attack, accusing newspaper proprietors of wanting "power without responsibility — the prerogative of the harlot through the ages". Press attacks provoked Harold Macmillan into dismissing a third of his Cabinet. Margaret Thatcher's attempt to ignore hostile coverage may have led to her doom in the form of the poll tax.

Attlee's indifference was not weakness, as Morrison thought. It was a source of strength. It enabled him to preside over the creation of the welfare state and the nationalisation of one fifth of Britain's economy in the teeth of strident opposition from the media. The newspapers may have had the power to deride and denigrate him and his Government, but he had a big majority and the will to govern. He did not have to be hurt by their criticisms, and he did not have to do what they wanted.

Blair's Government also has a big majority, but it still seems determined to avoid policies which will incur press hostility, and it feels the need to try to strain to control its press coverage. Peter Mandelson is now in government. And he has something his grandfather never had: the complete trust of the Prime Minister. Perhaps he and his Prime Minister should acquire a little of Clement Attlee's sang-froid.

Francis Beckett's book, *Clement Attlee*, is published today by Richard Cohen. Simon Jenkins is away.

You can't imagine Attlee passing a mobile to a journalist

Strangers in their own lands

Isabel Fonseca
on the plight of Europe's Gypsies

In the past few days nearly 200 Czech and Slovak Gypsies have arrived at Dover, joining some 600 others who have come over in recent months. They have been greeted with suspicion and alarm in broadsheet and tabloid newspapers alike. The very word "Gypsy", usually followed by "hordes" or "thieves", is often shorthand for swindlers and parasites; that is, it refers not to an ethnic group but to a social type. They are stigmatised as Eastern European Gypsies — as opposed, for example, to Eastern European Jews. No one blinks if an MP dismisses their claims and maligns their collective character.

What are they trying to escape? Gypsies everywhere are mostly illiterate, poor and without proper housing. Their health is worse and their lives are about a third shorter than those of their countrymen. And Eastern European Gypsies are not alone in their vulnerability: 70 per cent of Italian Gypsy families lose at least one child, while among Irish travellers infant mortality is three times the national average.

The social and political climate in Slovakia — where many Gypsies live in squalor and destitution — may be judged by a remark of President Vladimir Meciar. "It is necessary," he claimed in 1993, "to curtail the extended reproduction of [this] socially unadaptable and mentally backward population." Gypsies are the quintessential outsiders of the European imagination; and in the Czech Republic, since the introduction of a much criticised new Citizenship Law, many have become strangers in their own land.

The European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), based in Budapest, monitors abuses of Gypsies' human rights. Its most recent newsletter documents the case of Ludovit Gorej, a Gypsy who was born a Czechoslovak citizen in 1976 and who spent most of his life in state-run orphanages in what is now the Czech Republic. Like many other Gypsy children, Gorej was released from institutional care at the age of 18 with nowhere to live and no right to work. He was an "undocumented alien".

The division of Czechoslovakia in 1992 has been a catastrophe for many Gypsies, because neither new state wants them. Without any legal representation, Gorej was sentenced to expulsion by a Czech court, but he was then refused admittance to Slovakia, the country of his new citizenship; at 19 he was homeless and stateless.

Gorej successfully challenged the ruling on his status. He won, but many others are in limbo. When the Citizenship Law came into effect approximately 100,000 Roma were instantly designated foreigners in the first act of mass disenfranchisement in Europe since the Second World War. Some aspects of the law have since been modified, but its substantive defects remain.

The ERRC reports a dreadful list of persecution across Europe. It includes mob violence against Gypsies in Poland; the murder of a Gypsy by a Bulgarian policeman; police abuses of Gypsies in Poland, Germany and Pisk, Czech Republic; attacks by military officers in Bulgaria; mob attacks on Gypsies in Klaurow, Czech Republic; skinhead attacks in Slovakia; Gypsies killed by unknown gunmen in France; and the forcible resettlement of Greek Gypsies.

In Romania, mobs have torched dozens of Gypsy settlements without punishment. Indeed, across the region, there has been a dramatic escalation of violence and hatred directed against them since 1989. They have also been subjected to routine, institutionalised discrimination in almost every area of life, from employment to housing. The Czech Republic was singled out for criticism by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights for the disproportionately high number of Gypsy children placed in schools for the mentally handicapped.

It is hard to overstate the desolation of the lives of Eastern Europe's Gypsies. They are a long-settled European population and their plight provokes indifference, perhaps, because it isn't new. Gypsies were slaves in the Romanian principalities for 400 years (until 1865); some 500,000 succumbed to the *porrajmos*, or the devouring, as Gypsies call the Holocaust. Their story is one of unmitigated persecution since they left their homeland in India 1,000 years ago. Now, numbering some eight million in Europe alone, the Gypsies are not only the continent's largest minority, they are also the fastest-growing population in countries with static or negative birth-rates. And so Gypsies — and the "Gypsy Problem" — will not go away.

Only 5 per cent of Gypsies are nomadic, but we still think of them as wanderers. Thus we can let ourselves be persuaded that they want to uproot their families and gamble everything on a foreign "handout". In truth, the vast majority of Gypsies, like most people, want to live in the countries in which they are born.

There is one constructive way to help them out: the proven mechanism of "linkage". All of Eastern Europe hopes to be gathered into non-Eastern Europe. This summer, for example, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary became the first countries to be accepted into Nato after the collapse of Soviet power. We might hope these aspiring nations will meet the challenge of the Czech President, Václav Havel, who once said: "The Gypsies are a litmus test not of a democracy, but of a civil society."

Isabel Fonseca is the author of *Bury me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* (Vintage).

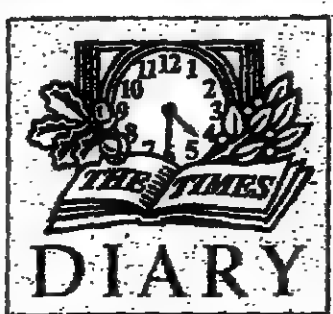
Country death

FIVE months after becoming Chancellor, Gordon Brown has yet to stay at his country residence, Dorneywood. In an unsuitable demonstration of his urban tastes, Brown ventures back to Scotland most Fridays after a week unsentencing the stock market. This represents a remarkable change. The Conservative Government was reduced to ridicule when Sir Geoffrey Howe sulked before accepting the house as compensation for losing the Foreign Secretaryship. Brown has made only a fleeting visit to the Queen Anne mansion one afternoon to "have a look", before returning swiftly to London. In response to the Chancellor's snub, Dorneywood's managers say they have been asked to throw open its 45 rooms to other ministers. Yet No 10 claims its use "is entirely a matter for the Treasury". Although John Prescott held a meeting there in July, the building — which costs tens of thousands of pounds a month to run — remains neglected.

The Treasury admits that it has not got around to using it yet, although "it will within the next couple of months", adding that Mr Brown is "not interested in the trappings of office".

He is supported by his predecessor, Lord Hesley, who found the perk embarrassing: "I was cracking down on subsidised housing, so I didn't think it would be wise. And I wasn't interested in all this bullshit about country houses. So the first time I went was when Geoffrey Howe invited me during his time there."

However, Norman Lamont, who revelled in his residency, is less sympathetic: "Nothing but gesture politics," he sniffs.



WHO says the Government is in disarray? Lord Simon of Highbury, the only minister who could do with more spin-doctors, addressed a dinner of sensible Europhiles at Tony Blair's favourite restaurant in Basingstoke the other night. "I was going to talk to you about the Government's policy on Europe," he said, "but my speech was written before 8 o'clock this morning." Cue: tucking of speech back into breast pocket.

Naff nosh

GARY RHODES, the unctuous television chef and new Labour foodie, is to start cooking William Hague's dinner. He is to take over the café at that parliamentary dooshouse, Dolphin Square. The spiky-haired chef is not one to over-boil his sprouts. His repertoire — steamed seabass

sushi, stuffed pimento tartlets — will satisfy the most demanding Socialist palate. "Gary will spend time at the restaurant and will ensure his team cooks to his style," gushes a notice to residents. This is unlikely to lure the Princess Royal — she left the square, finding it "naïf".

AFTER his gloomy sojourn in the sub-continent, Robin Cook, I am glad to hear, plans a more congenial trip. He was spotted in King's Cross bookshop — reading about bargain breaks.

Blue note

ARCHIE NORMAN has done the Full Monty. Thankfully, this modern-day polymath — MP, Tory party vice-chairman and chairman of Asda — is not to reveal his greatness before a hysterical Smith Square typing pool. Instead he is to save a group of unemployed steelworkers featured in the film. The Stockbridge Brass Band has lost its sponsorship and was threatened with a permanent muting. Now Mr Norman has persuaded Asda to sponsor them. But would the MP for Tunbridge Wells ever consider such an outé occupation as stripping? "There is nothing secretive or mysterious but I just don't want to talk about it now." Quite so.



THE dress designer Isabel Kristensen (right) is in despair: her most loyal customer Shirley Bassey has withdrawn her big spending custom. "An Isabel dress split on Shirley, who was singing at the Festival Hall, and now she won't go near her," says the ubiquitous Liz Brewer. "It's caused a very unpleasant atmosphere." The impressively constructed Ms Bassey is in New York, scouring Macy's for sturdier frocks.

HAPPILY Mr Cook is not too blue. Ever since his old chum Gordon Brown got into a muddle over EMU, the Foreign Secretary has been looking rather chipper. "India," smiles a friend. "Who remembers India now?"

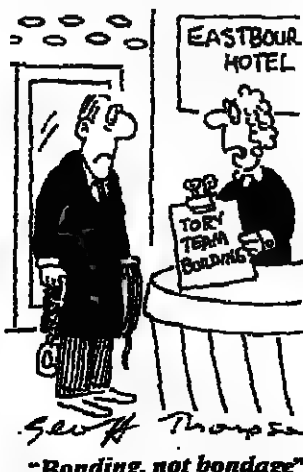
Late swing

WHEN the Queen returned from India, she might well have found



her wine cellar a bit dry. For in her absence the Prince of Wales threw a "becher of a party. The music swung, the drink flowed. "Camilla Parker Bowles was absent but that hardly halted the fun at all. Says a guest: "The atmosphere was quite different from when the Queen is at home. It was absolutely terrific. Talk about when the cat is away."

JASPER GERARD





PRODI'S SHORT SPOON

Italy's obsession with EMU has produced a devilish bargain

Last week's Italian Government crisis was short; its aftermath will be anything but sweet. Now that Italians are beginning to work out the costs of Romano Prodi's readiness to be blackmailed by the country's small hardline Communist Party, the deal he struck is revealed as a grievous defeat for social reform, economic stability and political accountability. They have reason to ask what, beyond the saving of his political skin, the Prime Minister has to crow about.

The first cause for concern is what his decision to win over the unacceptable face of Italian socialism says about the unreformed condition of Italian politics. Behind all the rhetoric about Italy's unmissable rendezvous with monetary union, the clear aim of President Scalfaro and Signor Prodi was to do anything, but anything, to avoid turning to the voters. Now that he is in power Signor Prodi, who once famously exhorted Italians to "vote, vote and vote again" until they got the government they needed, appears to have lost his enthusiasm for the ballot box. Government crises are once again, it seems, what they have been for half a century, affairs to be tackled behind closed doors by the familiar cast of party tacticians.

Equally disturbing are the terms of this deal. Signor Prodi's coalition of the Left relies on the votes of the Communists; they are the rotten earth around his Olive Tree coalition. Once Fausto Bertinotti, their leader, had announced that they would vote against the "EMU or bust" budget for 1998, Signor Prodi had a choice between going to the country, accepting the centre-right Opposition's offer of a "government for Europe" or buying out a bunch of unreconstructed reactionaries. The course he chose was bad for Italy; and in his anxiety to seal this Faustian pact, he used too short a spoon.

That is the verdict not only of any economist with a pencil and the back of an envelope to hand; almost uniquely in Italy's

postwar experience, Signor Prodi has united both employers and unions in protest. Confindustria, the employers' federation, has made the obvious point that Signor Prodi's promise to follow France in cutting the working week by 2001 from 40 to 35 hours will, by adding 10 to 12 per cent to labour costs, jeopardise jobs rather than create them. Pietro Larizza, leader of the UIL union federation, not only agrees, but says that the pledge is a recipe for industrial strife and that Italy will "end up paying with social war" for the political peace which the Government has bought at such expense.

Signor Prodi may hope to wriggle out of this particular promise, pleading that these two pillars of Italian corporatism must first agree. But he is solidly committed to other giveaways that blow huge holes not only in his reputation for political courage but in Italy's finances. Even in its original form, the 1998 budget was a conjuring trick that squeezed Italy into its Maastricht suit for the time being, but fell far short of the pension reforms without which the State is headed for bankruptcy. It will fall far shorter now. Almost casually, he has exempted manual and other workers from pension reforms, set aside 3,000 million lire of the proceeds from privatising Telecom Italia for job creation in the South and stopped dead the privatisation of ENEL, the state electricity giant. Confindustria says that with Signor Prodi's hands now tied on pension reform, the tripartite talks due to resume today are pointless.

This retreat betrays Italians who have shown their readiness to pay dearly for real reform. Victory in this battle against the past is not only indispensable to Italy's survival inside monetary union; it is too important a strategic goal to be subordinated to the EMU timetable. Signor Prodi may think that he has saved Italy from a crisis, but he has laid the ground for a much graver one, and it will come sooner than he imagines.

DISASTER IN THE MAKING

El Niño's impact should be anticipated now

The erosion of Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach may be the most spectacular example of the El Niño effect but it is hardly the most important. The impact of this extraordinary climatological phenomenon may eventually cost more than \$10 billion. El Niño is a periodic disturbance of the ocean currents and winds of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. As a result, weather patterns that normally travel between the Americas and Asia first abate and then reverse course. The consequence is that areas which would normally expect heavy rainfall receive relatively little and places that would usually anticipate little rain are suddenly inundated. This is most dramatic in the Pacific but it affects the entire planet.

El Niño is not in itself novel. Until recently, it has occurred on a regular basis—every three to seven years. The scale is usually modest although always disruptive. It has been 15 years since the last major disaster which led to more than a thousand deaths and \$8 billion in expense. For reasons that remain a matter of extreme meteorological controversy, these patterns seem to have altered of late. Some sort of El Niño was registered in every year between 1991 and 1995. In 1996 it suddenly disappeared completely. This year is likely to witness the most serious example this century. Average global temperatures may reach their highest ever recorded levels this year. They will probably be exceeded once again in 1998.

It is difficult to understate the devastation this involves. The vast forest fires in Indonesia, which have blanketed neighbouring nations in poisonous haze, have been gravely worsened by the drought caused by El Niño. Harvests have suffered and water has become exceptionally scarce throughout that region, halting most mineral produc-

tion in Papua New Guinea. The rice crop in the Philippines has all but failed. The west coast of the Americas has endured tumultuous rainfall from Canada to Chile. Floods have prompted vast insurance claims in California. The outcome will be noted in the supermarket as well as South America. Grain has been hit hard throughout the southern hemisphere. Coffee prices will spiral. Chilean wine will prove a washout.

If, as seems likely, this is indeed the largest El Niño on record then numerous fragile economies will suffer enormous harm. The full scale of their pain will become apparent only next year when the extremely warm ocean currents that have rapidly moved from one end of the Pacific Ocean to the other finally run their course. Sea temperatures, which are currently more than 5°C above average, should then start to cool. The World Bank has swiftly alerted aid agencies to the coming problems. It is less clear whether individual donor nations are as equally prepared.

Mankind will never achieve control over the elements. That does not mean that people are entirely helpless. The American Climate Prediction Centre has become ever more accurate in its anticipation of both the timing and extent of El Niño. Last time, countries that heeded these early warnings were able to alter crop plantings, to beneficial effect. Those that did not this time will have little excuse. Although the World Bank has been vigilant, other international bodies have been less impressive. Those responsible for advance purchase of agricultural commodities have substantial room for sharp improvement as well. Brazil's beaches will recover in due course. A more robust approach could ensure that others are better able to adjust to this climatic freak.

ER, MINISTER

Ministers should not sign what they have not read

British officials have an international reputation, normally deserved, as skilled drafters of international agreements. British ministers, too, pride themselves on being alert to the hidden perils of the small print. Yet the only rational explanation for Britain's enthusiastic adherence to the Dublin Convention on the treatment of asylum-seekers in the European Union is that its negotiators spent three years half asleep and that no one bothered to read the final text before the then Home Secretary, David Waddington—who appears not even to remember doing so—signed it in June, 1990.

John Major surely cannot have read it either, or he would not have ratified it in July 1992, earlier than any of the other 12 EU signatories except Denmark. Until this week, no one seems to have checked it either. Since 1990, Home Office ministers and officials have been briefing journalists, and maintaining in legal submissions to British courts, that the convention affirms Britain's right to return asylum-seekers to the first EU country entered. In 1992, when Britain was, to its shame, sending genuine refugees from the former Yugoslavia back to countries such as Germany which already had more than 200,000 of them, the Home Office privately dubbed this "to do a Dublin". Tony Blair, who as Shadow Home Secretary protested vehemently at the time that Britain's conduct was "disgraceful", did not query its legality. Only now, after the convention has

entered into force, have officials "discovered" that it means the exact opposite.

Yet no legal genius is required to understand this. Article 7 is as clear as it is explicit. It says that where an "alien", defined as any non-EU citizen, enters a EU member state without needing a visa, then proceeds to another EU state and then lodges an application for asylum, "the latter state shall be responsible for examining the application". This is reinforced by Article 8. Article 10 further obliges that state to accept back asylum-seekers who then slip into another EU country, even if it has rejected their application or if they have withdrawn it and applied in another EU state.

The Dublin Convention serves some useful purposes. The rules prevent asylum-seekers "shopping around" for the country with the highest benefits or—as in Britain's case—the slowest procedures. They also aimed at ending the inhumane shunting of asylum-seekers from airport to airport while governments argued over who was responsible. But the main argument for dropping the "first safe country" rule was that the EU was to abolish internal frontiers, which Britain has always refused to do. Britain should not therefore have signed it. It cannot now, like Humpty Dumpty, assert that this convention "means just what I choose it to mean". But in future EU negotiations, this unworn display of Tory carelessness should put this Government on its guard.

Commonwealth and human rights

From Mrs Anita Roddick, Founder of the Body Shop

Sir, Last week, a single, creased passport-sized photo of an Ogoni man called Kale Bete arrived in the mail for me from Nigeria. His picture joins 19 others on my wall of Ogoni men who today sit in a stinking cell at Port Harcourt prison: the same cell from which they watched the execution of their leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa, during the last Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Raddick in 1995. Two years on, these 20 young men, held for over three years without trial, are facing the same trumped-up charges used by the Nigerian military to justify the execution of Ken and eight others. Their conditions are appalling, driving them to a hunger strike last month, which resulted in one of their number being rushed to hospital.

This week, the same Commonwealth leaders who so vehemently condemned Ken's killing meet in Edinburgh. But, at the weekend, while Kale Bete and his 19 colleagues languish in their dark hole, the Commonwealth leaders will be "relaxing" at St Andrews.

Do not doubt we will hear talk of "progress" in Nigeria and calls for "quiet diplomacy" if prisoners are to be released. It has already started. Chief Anyaoku, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, is already talking of "Nigeria putting itself right in the space of the next 12 months". Apparently, Commonwealth leaders want to give the military dictators a chance and not act against them as they promised two years ago. Instead, they are giving them another 12 months in which to hold democratic elections.

Have our leaders learned nothing? It pains me to remember how Ken's son pleaded in Auckland with the Commonwealth to take effective action to save his father. They didn't, telling him and the rest of us that "quiet diplomacy" would save the day. It didn't.

If Kale and his colleagues are to avoid the same fate, the Commonwealth must act this time. If Nigeria is to get its extra year, then every month must see another step on the road to democracy, beginning with the release of the Ogoni 20 and followed by the withdrawal of the Nigerian military from Ogoniland. If not, then the Ogoni 20 will no longer be innocent prisoners of the Nigerian dictatorship, but of the Commonwealth as a whole.

Yours faithfully,
ANITA RODDICK
Founder, The Body Shop.
The Body Shop International plc,
Watershead,
Littlehampton, West Sussex.
October 20.

Gypsies from Slovakia

From the Reverend John Webster

Sir, Who will stand up for the "up to 6,000 Gypsies" who say they face persecution in Eastern Europe (reports, October 21)?

Some may certainly be coming to this country for economic reasons, but every Roman must be fearful of what may befall them when they have curfew imposed by the Slovak Government and the same Government has cut child benefit to Romanies to curb the "reproduction of socially unacceptable people".

The Roman people have every right to their ancient language and culture, and were shown more tolerance by the old Habsburg regime than many of the modern so-called "democracies" of Eastern Europe. A large portion of Romanies are God-fearing Christian people, many of them Pentecostals.

Will our Foreign Secretary, who is seeking to exercise ethical values in diplomacy, and our representative at the United Nations speak for them?

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WEBSTER
(Minister, Stoneham Road
Baptist Church),
7 Amherst Crescent,
Hove, East Sussex.
October 21.

Caught on camera

From Mr T. Jackson

Sir, Having recently made a return journey between London and Preston by road, negotiating three busy motorways (M25, M40 and M6) in the process, I would like to offer a tip to those many reasonable, law-abiding and competent car drivers among your readers who have suffered the menace of other cars tailgating them at high speed in an attempt to "bully" their way past.

Simply ask your passenger to turn around and point a video recorder at the offending vehicle through the back window and then watch it retreat quickly into the distance. It is particularly effective when the now surprised driver is simultaneously making one of those terribly urgent mobile phone calls.

Yours faithfully,
TIM JACKSON,
29 Finkfold Road, Streatham, SW16.
October 19.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Nigella Lawson's 'no-hope' teachers

From the Reverend P. P. S. Brownless

Sir, Nigella Lawson (article, "No-hope in the classroom", October 15) makes some useful points concerning the lack of good teachers. Teacher-training courses are generally regarded as a waste of time by graduates whom I have known over the years. But the real difficulty is that teaching is no longer any fun. It has always been hard work: now it is just drudgery.

Lack of discipline, because teachers now have no effective sanctions, and the plethora of regulations mean that it is almost impossible to get on with the job. Many able teachers are longing to get out and quite a number seek early retirement.

Yours faithfully,
P. P. S. BROWNLESS,
(Headmaster, Lambrook School,
Bracknell, 954-71),
The Hornpipe,
Oak Meadow, Birdham,
Chichester, West Sussex.
October 16.

From Mr Neil Welton

Sir, Nigella Lawson reflected the challenge I face as an undergraduate considering a possible career in teaching. My experience in state schools has, sadly, provided me with more reasons not to enter teaching than to do so.

I have met teachers without basic O-level/GCSE qualifications and noted how dogma and liberal theory have been put before the educational wellbeing of the children. I have witnessed staff political struggles which have been more childish than the children and met arrogant head-teachers whose "philosophy" must be carried out by all staff, or else.

It will take more than cinema advertisements with "successful" people, none of whom entered teaching (report, October 15), to convince me. Teaching and teacher-training need further reform. They need to embrace the very values that many teachers reject—competition and selection. Future teachers, but more important current teachers, must be fully exposed to them.

Yours sincerely,
N. WELTON,
The White House,
1 Aberdulia Road,
Llandaff North, Cardiff.
October 15.

Living wills

From Mr Gerard Wright, QC

Sir, You report today the Lord Chancellor's expressed intention to initiate legislation which will give legal validity to so-called "living wills". A living will is more properly called an advance directive; it sets out a person's wishes should there come a time when he or she is physically or mentally incapable of consenting to, or of refusing, medical treatment.

In proposing new legislation the Lord Chancellor is thus stepping into a medico-legal minefield. Who will inform the maker of an advance directive that there are strong grounds for believing that an unconscious or vegetative person who is deprived of hydration will suffer all the pangs of thirst and will die in agony?

Who will be able to inform the advance director what advances will

have been made in medical science by the time that the directive becomes operative? Who can predict that in 20 or 30 years' time the 20-year-old who has bought a form from a supermarket (as Allan Levy, QC, suggests he could) will still be of the same mind or will even remember that he has made a directive forbidding doctors from providing treatment which they know can restore the director to good health?

The advance directive is much cherished by the Voluntary Euthanasia Society. It is part of the culture of death which is insidiously growing in our society. The Lord Chancellor should reject this highly dangerous concept.

Yours etc,
GERARD WRIGHT,
Kings Court,
Kings Gap, Hoylake, Wirral.
October 14.

From Mr P. R. Millett

Sir, I endorse Mr Michael Pengelly's protest (letter, October 15) about the closure of magistrates' courts. As a prosecuting solicitor I used to cover five courts in west Dorset in the 1970s; even then we were never short of work.

I also endorse the case made by the Chairman of the Hong Kong Magistrates' Association, in an adjoining letter, for enlarging the work of magistrates.

I was later a salaried (ie, stipendiary) magistrate in Hong Kong; the system was remarkably efficient and the number of appeals to the higher courts was infinitesimal.

Any closure of present magistrates' courts would have to be accompanied as regards efficiency (but not local convenience) by the appointment of many stipendiaries.

I am, Sir, your faithfully,
P. R. MILLETT,
The Old School,
Hoghill Street,
Beaminster, Dorset.
October 15.

Strokes and polyglots

From Dr B. I. Chazan

Sir, I was fascinated to read about the foreign accent syndrome ("Scots stroke victim awakes with a South African accent", report, October 13).

In the early 1960s I reviewed a chapter on the effect of strokes on polyglots, written by a professor of neurology in Jerusalem's Hadassah University Hospital. He found that, on recovery from a serious stroke, patients who previously had been fluent in several languages tended to revert to their mother tongue. This sometimes had very distressing consequences. Thus the high German of an intellectual Swiss was replaced by coarse low German on his recovery from a stroke.

More poignant was the case of a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany who, on reaching the shore of what is now Israel, swore that from that day

on he would not utter a word of German. He settled on a kibbutz and assiduously learned, and subsequently became highly proficient in, Modern Hebrew. After a stroke in his 50s, thirty years on, he was horrified to discover that the only language he could speak was German.

I wonder if Scousers or Cockneys or Glaswegians (like myself), who have gentrified their accents, revert to their robust native accent after a cerebral event. I have not noted this in any of my patients. Could the change in accents described in the report be more apparent than real, resulting from spastic rigidity in muscles concerned with vocalisation and articulation?

Yours sincerely,
B. I. CHAZAN,
White Gates, Ashburne Court,
Sunderland, Tyne and Wear.

Looking back on Lord Tonypantry

From the Reverend Dr Kenneth G. Greet

Sir, There is something perverse about the habit of character assassination, particularly of those who have died. The article on Lord Tonypantry by Sir Robert Rhodes James to which you refer (report and photograph, October 17) is an example of this black art.

A close friendship with George Thomas since the days fifty years ago when I was his Methodist minister in Tonypantry enables me emphatically to reject this picture of him.

It is one thing to present a balanced view of a man which recognises both his strengths and his weaknesses; it is quite another to convey an image which I regard as being distorted beyond recognition. It will cause sadness and offence to many who recall with gratitude the warmth and kindness of one who brought enrichment to countless people, famous and obscure.

Yours sincerely,
KENNETH G. GREET,
Redcroft, 89 Broadmark Lane,
Kuslington, West Sussex.
October 17.

From Mr Francis Bennion

Sir, I am horrified that someone you describe as a distinguished historian should so obviously attack the late Viscount Tonypantry so soon after his lamented death.

I knew George Thomas (as he then was) for some ten years in the 1950s and 1960s. It was then the practice for the assistant draftsman of a public Bill to sit next to the chairman of the standing committee and advise him. It chanced that I did this frequently at times when Thomas was chairman, as he frequently was.

You report the distinguished historian as accusing Thomas of chairing standing committees in a dictatorial manner and treating officials with contemptuous disdain. The direct opposite was the case in my recollection. Thomas was friendly and easy with everyone involved, and anxious to do his job as well as it could be done.

The distinguished historian says Thomas only wanted you as a friend if he thought you could be useful. This certainly did not apply in my own case. As a mere assistant draftsman I could not conceivably have been of the slightest use to this rising politician. Yet Thomas went out of his way to befriend not only me but also my wife and family, even visiting our home. I never met anyone in public life who had such genuine concern for others.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCIS BENNION,
5 Old Nursery View,
Kennington, Oxford.

From the Vicar of Horsham

Sir, Sir Robert Rhodes James tells us that Viscount Tonypantry, the former Commons Speaker, was a "bully". If he was, then at least he was so to his victims whilst they were alive.

Yours faithfully,
DEAN TANSILL,
The Vicarage,
Causeway, Horsham, West Sussex.
October 17.

Mixed doubles

From Mr T. J. Elliott

Sir, Your correspondence on the relationship between tennis partners (October 14 and 17) prompts a broadening of the subject.

A relative of mine used routinely to say "Goodnight" to her husband before settling down to play bridge. This was on the tried and tested ground that they would not be on speaking terms on rising from the table later on.

They remained happily married.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY ELLIOTT,
Lark Hill,
Haynes West End, Bedfordshire.
October 17.

'Standing Stone'

From Dr David Phillips

Sir, I for one remember your critic William Mann's comparison of the Beatles with Schubert, back in 1967. It still astounds me.

How can one compare the trivial and uninspired C Major string quintet, say, with anything so profound as "We All Live in a Yellow Submarine"—the very words suggesting oceanic depths?

And as for those "poignant texts" to which John Allison refers ("Mood music for the middle-aged", report, October 15), how could one mention anything by Goethe (*Ich denke dein*, for example), set to music by that poor hack Schubert, in the same breath as the beautiful and subtle Beatles lyric, "Yeah, yeah, yeah"?

One has only to reflect on the fact that Schubert slogged away on his own and died in poverty, while Sir Paul McCartney is rich enough to engage a team of "five helpers on the score" of his latest masterpiece, to conclude that a comparison between the two is not so much odious as hopelessly incongruous.

Yours truly,
DAVID PHILLIPS,
1 Post Office Cottages,
Shottenden, Canterbury.
October 15.

OBITUARIES

KENNETH WOOD

Kenneth Wood, inventor of the Kenwood Chef electric mixer, died on October 19 aged 81. He was born on October 4, 1916.

Kenneth Wood developed and gave his name to one of the favourite fixtures in the postwar kitchen. The prototype of his Kenwood Chef electric mixer drew raised eyebrows from bankers and other backers when he tried to finance its production in 1948. Potential suppliers were no more impressed, demanding money upfront before he handed over parts. But Wood went ahead regardless, and was richly rewarded for his faith. Housewives loved the new product, which chopped and kneaded and peeled and mixed, taking the preparatory drudgery out of cooking at a time when domestic servants were suddenly scarce.

A working workshop in 1947, Kenwood was selling the world's largest range of domestic products. Subsequently transformed by a management buyout and a stockmarket flotation, the company celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year.

Kenneth Maynard Wood was born in Lewisham and educated at Bromley County School. His father died when Kenneth was 12, and at 14 the boy decided, despite his mother's objections, to go to sea. He joined the tramp steamer *Harlepool* as a navigation apprentice on a voyage to South America. He jumped ship in Brazil on his maiden voyage, but was eventually to remain at sea for four years.

Back in England, at 30, he enrolled in evening classes to study accountancy and electrical engineering. He found work in a radio repair shop, and then built up a radio business of his own. During the war he joined the RAE, transferred to the Admiralty, he worked on the design of radar simulators.

His first venture into kitchen appliances came after the war, when he set up a company with a partner, the name was Roger Laurence, and but for the timely intervention of a shrewd accountant, what is now one of the best-known brands in the world might well have been sold as Woodlau.

The wartime production effort had made Wood aware of the benefits of factory automation — and of its potential benefits in the home. Cash was a problem, however. The company started life in a tiny workshop next door to a fishmonger's in Woking, with Wood paying himself £7 week and borrowing much of the £400 he needed to manufacture his first product, a toaster.

The Kenwood toaster, Wood admitted, borrowed from and improved on similar products by more established manufacturers: labour-saving devices had long been common in American and Continental homes. The Kenwood mixer was no more original, though it was bulkier and heavier than its rivals, with a separate motor, and its solidity seemed to impress potential buyers.

The real secret of the Kenwood Chef's success lay not in engineering but in marketing, however. A brilliant salesman, Wood was quick to see that demonstration was the best way to sell his products. When Harrods took and demonstrated 25 mixers, the entire stock sold out almost at once; other big London department stores, which had rejected Wood when he approached them first time round, now rushed to order and to organise demonstrations.

Wood was energetic in pursuing the export market too. The Kenwood Chef sold particularly well in France, where its ability to make mayonnaise in seconds was apparently much admired. In Canada, where US manufacturers dominated the market, a cunning door-to-door sales scheme helped Kenwood to make inroads: salesmen purported to be doing market research on consumer reaction to a new brand of powdered milk; while the mixed milk cooled in the fridge, the Chef was demonstrated to pass the time. "We started selling mixers," said Wood, "but we also sold a hell of a lot of milk."

Kenwood, which had been on the verge of bankruptcy when the Chef was first developed, now went from strength to strength. Belgium, Switzerland and Israel were among the markets in which it prospered. At home, it was able to buy up other companies in the field, and expand its range to include everything from irons to dishwashers and waste-disposal systems. Wood was a millionaire at 42.

He had built up an effective team at Kenwood, and was able to draw on such talents as the distinguished designer Kenneth Grange, who revamped the Kenwood Chef in the 1960s, and the company finance expert Ian Morrow, who helped to turn sales into profits. There were setbacks, however, notably a disastrous foray into refrigerators in the

early 1960s, and the company turned out to be a fairly easy target for the predatory attentions of Thorn Electrical Industries in 1968.

Wood did not hit it off with Sir Jules Thorn, and was not prepared to be a minion; he severed his links with the company once the takeover was complete. He later welcomed the management buyout which restored the company's independence in 1989, and the subsequent stockmarket flotation. As recently as 1992, updated versions of the Kenwood Chef still accounted for almost a third of the group's total sales.

Wood pursued a number of other business interests after leaving the company he had founded. He was managing director of the power plant manufacturers Dawson-Keith Holdings from 1972 to 1980, and of Hydrotech Systems from 1984 to 1987. He was also active in the leisure industry, founding the Forest Mere Health Farm at Liphook and developing a golf club near his home. But he had always said that he "didn't want to be one of those goons who ends up with £4 million and hasn't lived", and he was happy to spend much of his time on the golf course.

Kenneth Wood was twice married. He is survived by his second wife Patricia, the two sons and two daughters of his first marriage, and by three stepsons.



GROUP CAPTAIN DESMOND SCOTT

Group Captain Desmond Scott, DSO, OBE, DFC and Bar, New Zealand wartime fighter ace, died in Christchurch on October 8 aged 79. He was born on September 11, 1918.

DESMOND SCOTT was one of that gallant — and gifted — band of New Zealanders who made a contribution to the Allied effort in the Second World War which was out of all proportion to their numbers. Indeed, he would undoubtedly have had a much higher tally of kills as a fighter pilot than the eight with which he was credited; had he not, from mid-1943, spent most of his time flying Typhoon ground attack and "tank-busting" aircraft.

As commander of 123 Wing in the Second Tactical Air Force during the Normandy campaign he made an invaluable contribution to the defeat of German attempts to organise an effective defence to the Allied advance. German Panzer commanders were repeatedly on the verge of succumbing to despair as they moved their armour forward only to be confronted by the spectre of the RAF's low-flying Typhoons, screaming in over the boggy country and wreaking havoc on tanks and self-propelled guns.



Scott, left, with Eisenhower in Holland, 1944; between them Wing Commander W. Dring, killed shortly afterwards

German had lost the battle for Normandy. As General von Lütwitz, commanding the powerful Second Panzer Division recorded: "Suddenly the Allied fighter-bombers swooped out of the sky. They came down in their hundreds, firing their rockets at the concentrated tanks and vehi-

cles. We could do nothing against them and we could make no further progress... We were forced to give up the ground we had gained and by August 9 the division was back where it started, having lost 30 tanks and 800 men."

Whatever the retrospective verdict on the effectiveness of Allied strategic bombing may be, the exercise of tactical air power received a triumphant vindication in Normandy. Five years later General Speidel's verdict was still that "armoured operation was completely wrecked, exclusively by the Allied air forces." In

the third week of August, with the remainder of the German forces trapped in the Falaise pocket, the Typhoons of 123 Wing completed the destruction of the enemy.

Besides being a triumph for the then fledgling doctrine of close air support of armies on the battlefield, the campaign was also a vindication of the Typhoon after early models of the aircraft had totally failed to impress as interceptor fighters at high altitude.

The Typhoon's excellent low-level performance, the robustness of its airframe and its ability to carry much heavier rocket and bomb loads than the Spitfire, made it an ideal fighter-bomber. These qualities enabled wings like Scott's No 123 to become the terrors of the skies over the Normandy battlefield.

Without them, Allied armour would have had a much worse time than it did against the superior Panther and Tiger tanks of the Wehrmacht.

Desmond James Scott was born at Ashburton, New Zealand, educated at the Cathedral Grammar School, Christchurch, and grew up in the North Canterbury hills. He served with the Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry before joining the Royal New Zealand Air Force in 1940, coming in March 1941 to England. On secondment to the RAF, he

was posted as a sergeant pilot to 3 Squadron whose Hurricanes were at that time carrying out fighter sweeps over occupied France.

He next had a period with 151 Squadron, a specialist night intruder unit. Returning to 3 Squadron in 1942, he carried out night sorties against German raiders, using the Turbinlite, an airborne searchlight carried by a bomber which was supposed to illuminate the target for an attacking fighter. This crude precursor of airborne radar was a flop — and Scott, by now commissioned, did not hesitate to tell his superiors what he thought of it. Nevertheless, he had his first successes against German aircraft, shooting down several bombers in the first six months of 1942 and being promoted to flight commander. He was awarded a DFC and Bar in rapid succession.

His introduction to the Typhoon was with the newly formed 198 Squadron, which he was appointed to command early in 1943. But he was soon posted again, this time to the second of the Royal New Zealand Air Force's squadrons to be formed in Britain, No 480. In sweeps and night intrusions Scott exploited the Typhoon's low-level performance to shoot down a Messerschmitt 109 and two Focke-Wulf 190s, to bring his score to eight.

By now he had an outstanding reputation as a fighter leader and in August 1943 was appointed a wing leader at Tangmere. By 1944 when he was posted to France to command 123 Wing he was, at 25, the youngest group captain in the RAF. Besides gaining a DSO he was also appointed OBE for rescuing a pilot from a burning aircraft. As CO of 123 Wing, Scott and his Typhoons followed in the wake of the Allied armies' victorious progress across Europe, giving strafing and rocketing support all the way.

After the war, though offered a permanent commission in the RAF, Scott elected to return to New Zealand in 1947 and there he established an import/export business. He was the author of two books describing his wartime experiences in Typhoons: *Typhoon Pilot* (1982) and *One More Hour* (1989).

He married, in 1944, Joyce Ramage, who died in 1969. He is survived by his second wife, Margaret, whom he married in 1972, by the four daughters of his first marriage, and by the two stepdaughters and the stepson of his second.

SIR GILBERT LONGDEN

Sir Gilbert Longden, MBE, MP for South West Herts, 1950-74, died on October 16 aged 95. He was born on April 14, 1902.

THE death of Gilbert Longden marks, yet again, the passing of the old Tory party which owed so much to the adoption of Beveridge and full employment in the years immediately after the end of the Second World War. Longden was an original member of the One Nation Group which included Enoch Powell, Edward Heath, Iain Macleod, Angus Maude, Reginald Maudling and Sir John Rogers. The group set the tone for the Tories in Opposition under Churchill, and remained the dominant influence in the party until Margaret Thatcher embraced monetarism in the late 1970s.

Longden was the only one of the group not to win office. He remained an articulate backbencher throughout his long parliamentary career, which ended at the age of 72 when he retired at the first of the two general elections of 1974. He was witty rather than eloquent, and his comments were pithy to the point of danger. He is perhaps best remembered for his comment at Prime Minister's Questions after Harold Macmillan's botched reshuffle of 1962, which became known as the "Night of the Long Knives". Longden said: "May I take this opportunity of congratulating the Prime Minister on having kept his head while all around were losing theirs." The House was convulsed with laughter.

Gilbert James Morley Longden was born at Castle Heath, Co Durham, the son of James Morley Longden and Kathleen Morgan. He was

educated at Haileybury, Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and the Sorbonne.

Convinced that war would soon follow upon the Munich agreement, Longden enrolled in the Army Officers' Emergency Reserve and in 1940 joined the Durham Light Infantry, which, consisting very largely of miners, was one of the most formidable county regiments in the British Army. He was adjutant at its regimental headquarters before being posted to the Far East in 1941.

He was appointed ADC to the Commander 2nd Division in India and then Deputy Assistant Adjutant General 36 Division in Burma. He took part in the Arakan Corridor campaign and the fall of Mandalay. He was demobilised as a major and appointed MBE (military division). At the general election of 1945 he contested Morpeth unsuccessfully, but he was adopted for South West Herts in 1950. Longden was an extreme moderate on the back benches of what was still, *au fond*, a right-wing party. He was a part author of *Change is Our Ally* before the 1955 general election, and *A Responsible Society* for that of 1959.

He was an enthusiastic European, serving both on the Council of Europe and the Western European Union. He was also a delegate to the 12th and 13th sessions of the United Nations General Assembly. He was knighted in 1972.

He was chairman of the All-Party British Atlantic Committee and of the Conservative Group for Europe. He typified all that was best in the conservative Party of his day. He left Parliament when Edward Heath was still Prime Minister, and would not have left at home under Mrs Thatcher. He was unmarried.



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ARREST OF AFRICAN LEADERS
FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NAIROBI, OCT 21
Jomo Kenyatta, president of the Kenya African Union, and nearly 100 other Africans, were arrested last night and today after the proclamation of the state of emergency in Kenya. Kenyatta, who was found asleep in his house 15 miles from Nairobi, made no attempt to resist arrest.

ON THIS DAY
October 22, 1952
Between 1952 and 1957 the Mau Mau, described as a "peasant revolution", terrorised Kenya. Europeans and Africans were victims; defence forces killed more than 11,000 Kenyans. In 1964, the country became a republic with Jomo Kenyatta as the first President; he died in 1992, a respected elder statesman.

Nairobi before they began. This failure of the security plans necessitated the advancing of the arrests by an hour.

Those arrested will be detained at the Governor's pleasure while the state of emergency lasts...

A Government spokesman, in reply to a question, said the suspects had been arrested because they had been responsible for causing disorder or inciting other persons to cause disorder, much of which had been through the agency of Mau Mau. A pattern was discernible, he added. The holding of public meetings, verging on the subversive, was

followed by increases in the areas reached by Mau Mau oath ceremonies and then of acts of violence. He said it should be noted that no steps had been taken against the Kenyan African Union as such. This is almost the only African political organisation in Kenya.

Kenyatta is a dynamic personality with great influence over the Kikuyu. Long before the war he was president of the Kikuyu central association, from which Mau Mau is believed to descend. He was in England from 1930 to 1946, and claims to have visited Moscow. Apart from his political activities he runs an independent school for African children, as described by Negley Farson in his book *Last Chance in Africa*. He has a following among teachers through the Kikuyu independent schools' association. The Mau Mau oath includes a pledge to defend Kenyatta. On the other hand, he himself has several times publicly denounced it. He is married to an Englishwoman who is in London.

Although all appeared normal here and in the provinces today, there can be no relaxation of precautions. There is always the possibility that the Mau Mau may react by isolated acts of violence, once its members have recovered from their bewilderment at the Government's swift action.

FT on
Laughing

TV is not exempt from the charge of intrusion

Time to clean up the 'media scrum'

EVERYONE in the media and beyond has been continuing to assess their performance on how they handled the reaction to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. This week commercial radio has been patting itself on the back for judging its response well. Talk Radio UK, the national commercial chat station, says it took its cue from listeners and simply opened its airwaves to the subject until the most talkative people had talked themselves out.

Television executives have already publicly exonerated themselves from any suggestion that they created the unprecedented reaction to the tragedy rather than merely responding to it. Reviews are continuing on how television will cover any future royal deaths, and there is no doubt that the coverage will be very different next time round.

Even the Church of England was reviewing its performance this week, and judged it good, except perhaps for a few clergy members who declined to open their churches to mark the occasion.

The most interesting response so far has been that of the national press, which benefited from huge circulation increases last month. A cynic might have assumed that the press would wring its hands in public for a few days, hold a few meetings with the Press Complaints Commission and wait for the furore to die down before resuming its bad old ways.

So far, the signs are encouraging that some permanent and fundamental changes to the standards that newspapers set themselves will be made, even though MPs who take mistresses can be sure of receiving the full traditional treatment.

A new draft code has already been agreed in principle and should be ready to be implemented on January 1. One aspect could take a little longer: trying to do something about the "media scrum" that descends on uniformed people who suddenly find themselves in the media eye, often at a time of great personal tragedy.

This is a problem that goes far beyond the press, and great weight is added to the media scrum by the arrival of numerous TV camera crews and radio reporters with microphones to shove in people's faces.

Lord Wakeham plans to have talks with Lady Howe of Aberavon, chairman of the Broadcasting Complaints Commission, to see whether some all-industry guidelines can be drawn up. It will be a difficult problem to solve. Each news organisation has a legitimate right to try to get its own words and pictures on a story. It is their

collective presence that changes the nature of the event and the degree of threat. The hope is that ways can be found at least to minimise the time the "media scrum" is in action. There are two useful precedents at Dunblane and Balmoral, when journalists did their jobs and voluntarily left. A wider use of "pooling" — using a small number of journalists to report on behalf of the many — on some stories might also help. In fact, the lack of pooling arrangements for the television coverage of the Princess's funeral service in Westminster Abbey is still causing squabbles between broadcasters, which could end up with the lawyers. There has already been an exchange of letters between the BBC and Reuters Television about whether the Reuters news agency had any right to transmit BBC pictures from the Abbey to its clients around the world.

But the real gain will be a new code which will prohibit publication of pictures obtained by "persistent pursuit" or the result of unlawful behaviour. Photo agencies fearing a fall-off in business seem to be very willing to put themselves within the ambit of the PCC and sign up to the industry's code of practice.

The comprehensive changes include trying to redefine the concept of privacy to include those areas which constitute "a private life", such as a person's home life, health and personal correspondence. Lord Wakeham also wants to try to ensure that any level of intrusion is proportionate to the public interest involved.

The reforms would also promise that young people should be able to complete their full-time education without unnecessary press intrusion, and the story should not be published about the children of the well-known unless there is justification for the story other than the relationship with either parent.

THERE will always be problems of definition, and some editors will undoubtedly try to test the new code to its limit. But so many changes are involved that they should not be dismissed as window-dressing.

The proposed changes being embraced by the newspaper industry come not a moment too soon. If self-regulation is not seen to work, then the planned incorporation of the Bill of Human Rights into British legislation will give judges the opportunity to extend a legal concept of privacy through case law.

Who doubts that they will take the opportunity, given half the chance?



RAYMOND SNODDY

Think big, think Hollywood

An air of louche glamour hangs over the offices of Working Title Films in Oxford Street. The company responsible for *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, which cost £3.2 million to make and earned £158 million, brings a small slice of Hollywood to grimy Central London.

Tim Bevan, Working Title's founder and co-chairman, puts his success so far down to luck. He now wants to produce films with bigger stars, bigger budgets and broader appeal — a strategy that has already created *Bean*, the Rowan Atkinson vehicle that has earned more than £63 million at the box office.

Mr Bevan, who said he was too busy to attend Tony Blair's entertainment industry party at Downing Street earlier this year, takes nothing away from Working Title's Hollywood image. The 39-year-old has filmstar looks coupled with a brooding personality. Employees say he can be frosty and aloof.

"Britain has to make a bigger movie," he says with a clipped, public school accent. "A *Four Weddings*, a *Train-spotting*, a *Full Monty*... all lovely little films, but lucky. There is no element to any of them that says you are reducing your risk."

In spite of his international ambition, he has a thin, disguised dislike of Hollywood. His ten-hour days are often extended by calls from Los Angeles and he hates having to visit the company's Hollywood office for two days every three weeks.

"I used to think travel was glamorous now I cannot think of anything worse than getting on a plane," he says. "We have also had bad experiences when employing people from Hollywood. The place is run on fear. You get these terrified people, almost like wounded animals; you just don't get very good work out of them."

Yet his plans for Working Title are based firmly on his understanding of Hollywood. "Our films need to be successful in America, particularly now that we are getting into bigger budgets. We can learn a lot from Hollywood and, I hope, create films that are off its beaten path."

The effectiveness of his strategy will soon be tested. Forthcoming releases include *The Borrowers*, based on the classic children's books by Mary Norton, and *The Matchmaker*, a romantic comedy about an American girl finding love in Ireland. Another big project is *Elizabeth*, a conspiratorial portrayal of the 16th-century monarch's reign.



Working Title's Tim Bevan says *Four Weddings and a Funeral* was "a lovely little film". It earned £158 million

The man behind Rowan Atkinson's *Bean* says British films rely too much on luck. Chris Ayres reports

egy will soon be tested. Forthcoming releases include *The Borrowers*, based on the classic children's books by Mary Norton, and *The Matchmaker*, a romantic comedy about an American girl finding love in Ireland. Another big project is *Elizabeth*, a conspiratorial portrayal of the 16th-century monarch's reign.

"We are very bad at making family movies in this country," says Mr Bevan. "Family, when it works, is phenomenally successful."

The son of a doctor, Mr Bevan skipped university and worked, unpaid, in the early 1980s for a company that made management training videos starring John Cleese. His fascination with the industry led him to borrow money and team up with Sarah Radclyffe, a friend, to form a music video production company, Alda-

bra, which did work for U2, Simple Minds and Frankie Goes to Hollywood.

"I learnt how to form a company, how to read accounts — what lawyers did," says Mr Bevan. "For people wanting to start in the film business, getting a law degree would not be a bad move."

"At that time we started to develop scripts. The first movie came from Stephen Pearns, one of our music video directors, who sent me the screenplay of *My Beautiful Laundrette*. He asked me to produce it. On the back of that, we formed the original Working Title company in 1984."

At 25, Mr Bevan took charge of a £600,000 budget that came directly from the coffers of Channel 4. "I was scared, I didn't know what was going on," he says. "But I learnt that if you get someone good and

ask them how to do something, they will show you."

My Beautiful Laundrette was the first in a string of successful low-budget films for the company, including *With You Were Here* and *The Tall Guy*. But Working Title was still making a painful loss and risked folding at any time.

"If you are going into film production, you need the backing of a big company because it is capital-intensive," says Mr Bevan.

Help came from his long-term friendship with Michael Kuhn, then a music video executive with Polygram, now the president of the company's film and television division. Mr Kuhn ploughed money into Working Title as an experiment and, in the early 1990s, Polygram

bought half of the company. Mr Bevan forged a new partnership with Eric Fellner, who had a similar background in music video production, and went on to sell the remainder of Working Title to Polygram.

"As someone with an independent spirit, I found losing ownership quite painful. But for the first time in Britain there is a company making films that are consistently of a reasonable scale and being properly distributed."

Working Title now has 32 staff and a mandate to make three or four films for Polygram each year. Mr Bevan says that only one in a thousand ideas, and one in five screenplay developments, makes it into production, with screenplays alone costing up to £475,000, before they are given the green light.

"You have to learn to beg, steal, borrow, put everything on credit, and really understand the business of film to make it work," Mr Bevan says.

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FT fall
PAPER ROU

Curry on laughing

Carol Midgley on a new TV sketch show with an Asian flavour.

When the definitive history of British comedy is written, Asian culture is unlikely to figure much. Trawl through the archives of sitcoms and comedy sketches and you will regularly find "gags" based around, and often at the expense of, black people (see *Rising Damp*, *Love Thy Neighbour*, *Till Death Us Do Part*), but few about Asians. Comedy scripts written by Asian people are virtually non-existent.

Next year, however, BBC2 is entering the traditional po-go area with a comedy series satirising Asian culture. Written by a young Asian cast, many of whom also star in the series, arranged marriages, social climbing and the religious practices of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims become the butt of humour in *Goodness Gracious Me*.

One would probably have to go back as far as 1970s programme *Curry and Chips*, in which Spike Milligan was blacked up to play the part of an Indian man, to find a British comedy show which hinged on Asian culture. However, commissioning editors know that there are two million Asian people living in the UK — a huge portion of the TV audience.

The format of the series, to be shown in January, is similar to other sketch shows such as *Not the Nine O'Clock News* and *The Fast Show*. On the team is Meera

Characters in the sketches include the Kapoors, a socially climbing couple so desperate to be accepted by white middle England that they pronounce their name "Cooper", and say that they wholeheartedly agree with the "Pakis out" sentiments of their racist neighbours who throw a brick through their window. "It is a type of *Keeping Up Appearances*, which is hilarious," Mr Ploymann said. "Most people wouldn't realise that that kind of attitude exists among the Asian population in Britain, but apparently it does, which is fascinating. It is a whole new window on a world you don't know much about."

Other characters include Ficer Uncle, who can always get things cheaper and better than anyone else, and the young Bombayites who go "for an English" — a search for the blandest food on the menu and a parody of macho white lager louts who go to an Indian restaurant in search of the hottest curry. In this sketch, the Indians plump for prawn cocktail, samurai steak and bread rolls with butter.

The stinginess of Asian matriarchs who refuse to go out for meals "because they can make it cheaper at home" and male chauvinism of their husbands is also mocked.

Anil Gupta, the show's producer who is half Asian, said there would be no no-go areas, although the series was not setting out to be controversial. "People have a slight trepidation when it comes to laughing at things to do with ethnic minorities because they fear people might be laughing for the wrong reasons," he said.

"We are just observing things about Asian family life, religion, and so on which has always made us laugh. We don't laugh at religion, but more at the practice of religion. For instance, there is a sketch where a Hindu son is asking his parents what being Hindu means. It turns out that his parents haven't ever thought about it and the best thing that they can come up with is that the defining principle is they don't eat beef."

He said it was no different to the comedian Dave Allen satirising his own religion, Roman Catholicism. "There will be people who will be offended but that isn't the intention," he said. "We just want to make people laugh."

It is hoped that the show, which will be released after the watershed, will take on a cult status in the way that *Vic Reeves* and *Bob Mortimer's Shooting Stars* and *The Fast Show* have done.

"We don't want it to be a ghetto show and we don't want it just to be watched by Asian people," Mr Ploymann said. "This is a very fresh, very new type of comedy which I think can be huge."



Meera Syal: writer and actor

Syal, who wrote *Bhaaji on the Beach* and *The Real McCoy*, Sanjeev Bhaskar, Kulvinder Ghir and Nina Wadia. Syal, Bhaskar, Sharat Sardana and Richard Pinto do most of the writing.

Jon Ploymann, the executive producer, who was also behind *Absolutely Fabulous* and *A Bit of Fry & Laurie*, said some of the humour is based on Asians mocking the blindness of English culture. "It is a chance to learn about how one bit of Britain sees another bit of Britain," he said. "It is not meant to be reflecting Asian culture to Asians, but to be mainstream for everyone."

The title, which is taken from the Peter Sellers and Sophia Loren song, *Goodness Gracious Me*, was intended to "send up" the view the British have of Indian and Pakistani people. A radio version has been run on Radio 4.



The departure of Alasdair Milne, left, from the BBC was to some extent precipitated by the Tory libel action, on which Norman Tebbit admits he received inside information

A four-part history of the BBC will reveal that Lord Tebbit, when he was chairman of the Conservative Party, intervened directly with the BBC governors in the row over *Maggie's Militant Tendency*, the *Panorama* programme about right-wing MPs.

Lord Tebbit has also admitted, in an interview for the series *Auntie: The Inside Story of the BBC*, that he had confidential information from inside the BBC on the strength of the corporation's defence of the libel action launched by two Conservative MPs mentioned in the programme, Neil Hamilton and Gerald Howarth. The row over the successful libel action helped to precipitate the removal of Alasdair Milne, the BBC Director-General.

In *Walking the Tightrope*, the fourth in the series made to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the BBC, which deals with the years 1970-86, Lord Tebbit admits: "I had the good fortune to receive — in a plain brown envelope, of course — some information about the legal advice which had been given to the corporation about its chances of winning the action."

Although the BBC was prepared to defend the legal action to the hilt, its internal legal advice was that the action was not likely to be won, mainly because witnesses were refusing to come forward. It is likely that Conservative Central Office could have obtained details about the case only from someone at a high level in the BBC. "I might have played some part in bringing about a settlement by making sure that the governors were made aware of the legal advice they [the BBC] had been given. I did think it was appropriate that in some way the governors should know of the advice on which they were going to court," Lord Tebbit said. In the film, Marmaduke Hussey, the

How Tebbit beat the BBC

The history of the corporation is studded with rows over libel actions and controversial documentaries. Raymond Snoddy reports

former Chairman of the BBC and now Lord Hussey of North Bradley, tells how he called for the papers to review the case. As a result, after only two days in court, the BBC management was told to settle and picked up the bill for legal costs.

The commemorative series has been made by 3BM, an independent production company. Its managing director, Jeremy Bennett, was executive producer in charge of BBC contemporary history programmes until he left in 1992 to become an independent. His credits range from *The Cuban Missile Crisis*, which won a US National Emmy in 1992, to *For BBC: What Did You Do in the War?*, *Auntie* about the BBC during the Second World War.

Mr Bennett insists he suffered no interference from the BBC in making the warts-and-all documentaries. He has, for example, been able to tell the embarrassing story of the "Christmas trees" — the symbols stamped on the files of staff seen as being politically questionable, after secret in-house vetting by MI5 officers.

The only exception to Mr Bennett's complete freedom was the editorial decision taken by Michael Jackson, then BBC director of television, now chief executive of Channel 4, that the series should end in 1986 and therefore not deal with controversies over how the BBC is run by its present Director-General, John Birt.

"I argued to go up to the present, and others did too, but the BBC made the decision," Mr Bennett says. "There is a very good practical reason for this, which I have come to accept, and that is that a lot of the people in the past ten years who have been responsible for the changes in the BBC are still in place, and they are not likely to talk."

For the four programmes he has produced, Mr Bennett has been able to call on the BBC's confidential internal archive for interviews by former war correspondent Frank Gillard with leading BBC personalities, usually after retirement when they felt more free to talk. There are more than 120 taped or filmed interviews. The stories from the early days include how Cecil Lewis, the first director of pro-

grammes under John Reith, tried to keep the well-known violinist Daisy Kennedy off the air because she was divorced. Mr Reith's secretary, Dorothy Torry, recalls how a well-known and well-liked newscaster was sacked by Reith because he was a homosexual.

There was also trouble after the war with the televising of male ballet dancers wearing white tights. Strong complaints were sent to Cecil McGivern, the director of television, with copies to the Home Secretary and the Archbishop of Canterbury, on such shocking broadcasts.

Mr McGivern issued a memo saying that male dancers dressed in white tights had to be shot "in such a way that the risk of shocking the audience is minimised". More seriously, Mr Bennett believes he has reached the truth of the long ban by the BBC of *The War Games*, which showed the devastating effects of nuclear war.

He has unearthed, and shows, documents that passed between Sir Burke Trend, the Cabinet Secretary, and Lord Normanbrook, the Chairman of the BBC. "It was quite clear that the Government was leaning on the BBC, but in a quite clever way," Mr Bennett says. "The BBC had to make its own decision but the Gov-

ernment was worried that there would be panic in the population." The final programme covers not only *Maggie's Militant Tendency* and the removal of Mr Milne, but also the huge row over the *Real Lives* documentary on Northern Ireland, *The Edge of the Union*.

Lord Rees-Mogg, then vice-chairman of the Governors, makes clear his objection to documentaries showing alleged terrorists dangling children from their knees without being confronted by the consequences of their actions. Mr Milne, who denounced the governors in public as "amateurs", argues equally strongly that there was very little wrong with the programme, apart from adding some evidence of IRA violence, which was the only change

made to the programme before it was ultimately shown.

The BBC Chairman at the time, the late Stuart Young, told the confidential BBC archive how he dealt with Mr Milne's apparent determination, at least according to the press, to go ahead and show the programme despite the governors' opposition. Mr Young said: "If you [Milne] say that programme is going to be broadcast, that is a downright lie. I will meet you at Broadcasting House at 11 o'clock in the morning and if, by 11 o'clock, you haven't resolved this... and got the true story to the press, I will not accept your resignation at 11, I will fire you." When Mr Milne was finally removed by the next Chairman, Mr Hussey, Lord Tebbit said: "Most Conservatives were glad."

Mr Bennett hopes that the BBC will continue its television history and that two more programmes, to take the story on from 1986, could be shown — perhaps around the turn of the century.

"Of course I hope very much that this history is going to continue, and Alan Yentob (BBC director of television) has said to me quite categorically that it will," Mr Bennett says. In fact Mr Yentob is expected to make just such a commitment later this week when he publicly launches *Auntie: The Inside Story of the BBC*, which, it is believed, cost just under £500,000 to make. *Auntie: The Inside Story of the BBC* starts next Tuesday on BBC1.

WHEN the *Financial Times* gets a scoop, the City reacts. Share dealers believe that what they read is accurate and can be believed. So the stock market soared and the pound slumped on September 22 when the FT's political editor, Robert Peston, reported that sterling was likely to join the European single currency at an early opportunity after the 1999 launch.

Last Saturday, a different version of government policy on EMU appeared on the front page of *The Times*. According to political editor Philip Webster, Gordon Brown was on the verge of ruling out British membership of a European single currency before the next election.

"Senior Treasury sources" (subsequently revealed as Charles Whelan, Brown's spin-doctor, calling from the Red Lion pub in Whitehall) made sure the message that the FT report was wrong got home to *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian*. Both reported that Britain would not enter a single currency until 2002.

The source named for Peston's story was not the usual "Downing Street sources" or the "Prime Minister's office" but an unnamed "minister", and it has now been confirmed that the minister was none of the usual suspects around the Chancellor. Webster's source was the Chancellor himself, speaking

FT falls through safety net

PAPER ROUND
Brian MacArthur

on the record, and his interpretation was confirmed by Treasury and Downing Street sources. So who is to be believed and trusted — the FT or *The Times*, *Guardian* and *Daily Telegraph*?

As Peston found over the weekend, it was difficult to wriggle off the hook. Although he followed up Webster's story on Saturday, he made no mention of the Brown interview, and his story was headlined: "UK rules out joining EMU before 2002" — not 2002. On Monday he returned to the subject again, signalling that Britain remained committed to preparing for monetary union "in spite of" the weekend disclosure that a decision was likely to be deferred until after the next election. He did admit, however, that the Government had "backed away" from the "more positive" approach he had reported three weeks ago.

His reports won him an unusually savage denunciation at Monday's briefing for lobby correspondents, at which he was accused of continuing to dig a hole for himself by maintaining that he had spoken to Treasury sources — and all this from the bible of the City, said the Prime Minister's spokesman.

There was also anxiety at the FT, where the inquest on Peston's reports was described as even more intense than the inquest on the FT's performance after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales. At stake for the FT is its credibility, particularly among its primary audience in the City and financial markets around the world.

There are some journalists whose work is so respected or sources so impeccable that their rivals know that at a push they can follow their stories without needing to check them. Such bylines as Raymond Snoddy, now of *The Times* but previously of the FT (on the media) or Richard Kay of the *Daily*



Credibility gap: conflicting headlines on EMU

Mail (on the late Princess of Wales) can be trusted. So could reports in the sober-sided FT. Peston is a talented reporter who has won prizes for his scoops, one of which was the details of Brown's first Budget. Yet older Westminster

hands are now wondering if his September "scoop", apparently based on only one source, was an example of the FT pushing a story too far. Surely, they argue, it should have been checked with all the usual Treasury sources. Political reporters often

describe their job as a high-wire act, but they know they have a safety net: their stories are subjected to sceptical scrutiny not only by night editors but also by editors themselves. Surely, the old hands add, the FT's editors should have subjected Peston's story to that level of scrutiny.

One reason why the story slipped through the net may be the curious state of flux now reigning at the FT as it pursues its push towards becoming a global newspaper — only half of the paper's circulation of 328,000 is now in Britain. Richard Lambert, the Editor, has moved to New York, where the FT is seeking to expand sales, leaving his deputy behind to look after the British edition.

Since it is thought unlikely that Lambert will return to London as Editor, the FT is riven by turf wars between departments and rivalry between its young Turks anxious to establish their credentials for the editorship. Simultaneously, as a newspaper of financial record but with no reputation for scoops, it is also competing with London's four other broadsheets for supremacy in political reporting, another temptation to publish "scoops" that don't quite add up.

Whatever the end result of this "scoop" was multimillion-pound losses for the dealers and businessmen who sold sterling after reading the FT.

THE TIMES/DILLONS FORUM

A satirical walk with
BILL BRYSON



READERS are invited to a forum with the bestselling author Bill Bryson, when he will read extracts from his gripping new book, *A Walk in the Woods*, giving accounts of his experiences along the longest footpath in the world, the Appalachian Trail. The trail promised Bryson endless days of walking, nights of eating strange foods and, most importantly, the chance to turn his inquiring, satirical eye once again on his native America.

The forum on Tuesday, November 4, will be held at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1, at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50) include £2 off the price of *A Walk in the Woods* (Doubleday, £16.99). There will also be an opportunity for the audience to ask questions.

THE BILL BRYSON FORUM

Please send me _____ ticket(s) at £10 each (£7.50 concessions) for The Times/Dillons Bill Bryson Forum on Tuesday, November 4, at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTCODE _____

DAY PHONE No. _____

I enclose my cheque made payable to Dillons the Bookstore
Value £ _____ Cheque number _____
(Please write your name and address on the back of the cheque)

Or, please debit my Credit / Bank Debit / Dillons account card number _____

Expiry date _____ / _____ Switch issue number ☐

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Dillons, 82 Gower Street, London WC1E 6EQ
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Ticket number _____ Date sent _____

NEWS

Treasury accused of euro profits

■ The Conservatives suggested last night that the Treasury may have profited from the confusion over its stance on a European single currency — and demanded an official investigation.

Peter Lilley, the Shadow Chancellor, has called for City regulators to examine allegedly unusual movements in the markets ahead of recent conflicting press reports on government policy. Page 1

Dressing down for modern Tories

■ William Hague's attempt to fashion a modern image for the Conservatives came apart at the seams at the start of a two-day bonding session for MPs. The latest fault line in the party was nothing to do with the usual flashpoint of Europe, but whether to be casual or smart. Page 1

Children can stay

Two Nigerian children who were ordered to be returned to their natural mother to grow up in their "own race and culture" are now to remain with their white foster mother. Page 1

Stonehenge rescue

An imaginative scheme to conserve Stonehenge received a dramatic boost when the Ministry of Defence gave the all-clear to a crucial new road. Page 2

IRA man was shot

An IRA plot to launch a bombing campaign ended with the leader of an active service unit being shot dead by police. The Old Bailey was told. Page 3

Gypsies warned

The Slovak Embassy tried to stop hundreds of Gypsies seeking asylum in Britain. As a further 30 Gypsies headed for Dover, the Slovaks warned that they would not be welcome. Page 4

Bride saves husband

A bride saved her husband's life after he was catapulted more than 30 feet into the air and knocked unconscious in a speed boat explosion. Page 5

Rector sex case

A woman let a friend use her home for a love affair with a clergyman, a court heard but she drew the line when she was invited to join in their bedroom sessions. Page 7

Diana record beats White Christmas

■ *Candle in the Wind 1997*, which Elton John performed at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales, in Westminster Abbey, has taken only 37 days to overhaul the sales of Bing Crosby's 1942 hit, *White Christmas*. The record has sold 31.8 million worldwide, including 5 million in Britain. The record company is donating its profits to the Diana memorial fund. Page 1

Royal cure

The Prince of Wales launched a debate into the role of complementary medicine, outlining his idea for using therapies alongside conventional medicine. Page 8

Judge under attack

A judge charged with his third drink-driving offence faced calls that were he to be convicted, he should be sacked. Page 9

Nurse accused

A former nursing assistant at a private old people's nursing home in Copenhagen was charged with the murder of 22 of its residents using pain killers. Page 12

Solzhenitsyn prize

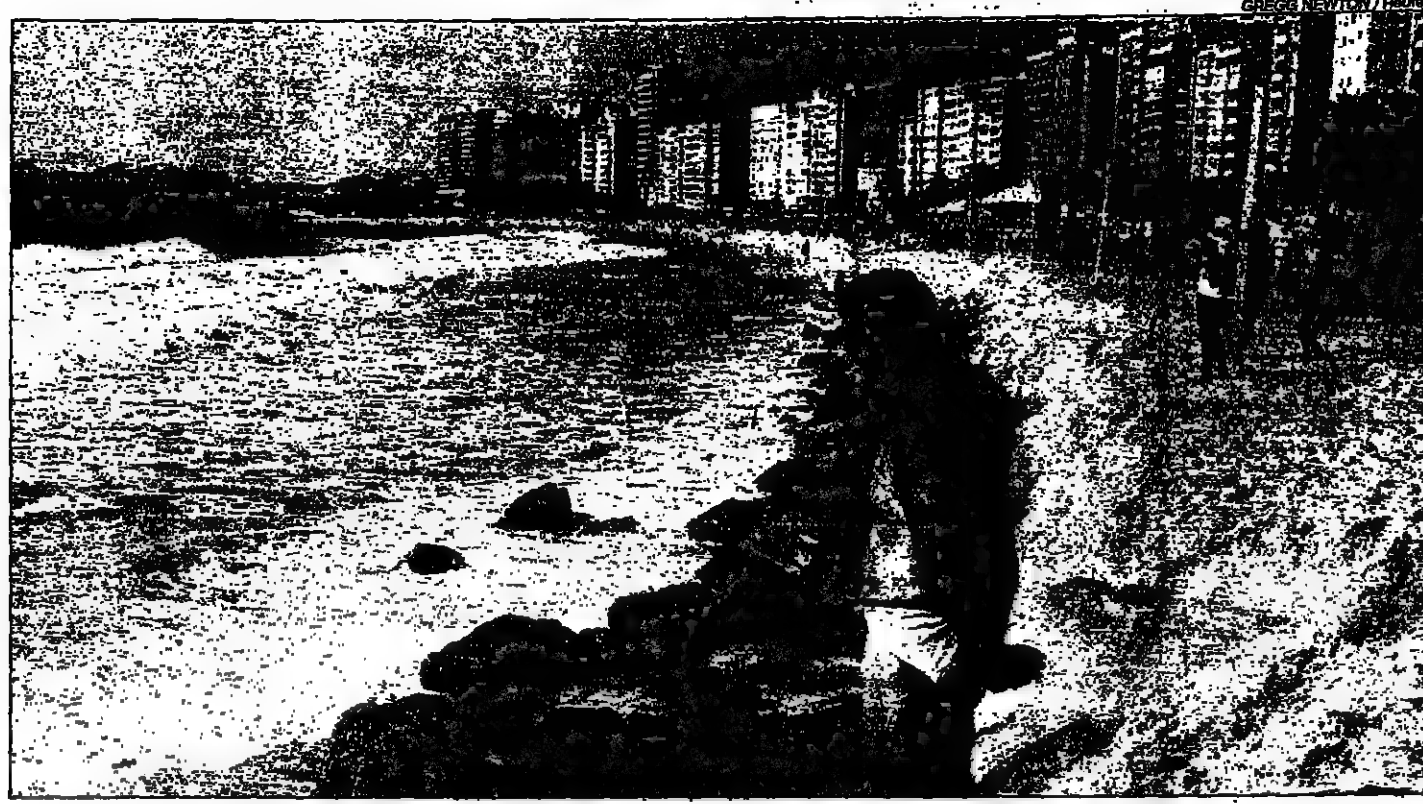
The Nobel laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn announced the creation of an annual literature prize in his name to help to reinvigorate Russian writing. Page 13

Papon defended

The historian who helped to expose the alleged Nazi collaborator Maurice Papon 16 years ago has claimed that the man accused of sending hundreds of Jews to their deaths saved many from the gas chambers. Page 14

Art theft saga

An outlandish tale of art theft — whose cast includes wartime Soviet soldiers, an unsavoury assortment of Azerbaijanis and an apparently dim-witted Japanese businessman — unfolded in a Manhattan court. Page 15



Storms have washed away tons of sand from Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach, leaving the rocky foreshore exposed. Page 15

BUSINESS

Pensions: Prudential Corporation, the biggest provider of pensions in Britain, was accused by regulators of serious shortcomings in its handling of mis-selling. Page 25

Saatchi: Zenith, the media buying arm of Cordiant, took its former boss, Christine Walker, to court after learning of her plans to join forces with Lord Saatchi, who was ousted as Cordiant chairman nearly three years ago. Page 25

Coal: Shares in RJB fell from 240p to 183p after a leading stockbroker warned the City on the prospects of the company. Page 25

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 14.9 to 5225.9, Sterling rose from 101.5 to 102.3 after rises from \$1.6305 to \$1.6348 and from DM2.8881 to DM2.9183. Page 28

SPORT

Football: Manchester United are confident of victory over Feyenoord in the Champions League but Alex Ferguson says that there will be no complacency. Page 48

Rugby union: Leading clubs yesterday denied that a multi-million pound split from the Rugby Football Union was under serious consideration. Page 48

Tennis: Tim Henman, who overcame Tommy Haas of Germany, will meet Goran Ivanisevic, the world No 4, in the second round of the Eurocup Open. Page 48

Sailing: The first leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race was won by *E.F. Language*. The Swedish yacht completed the 7,350-mile course in 30 days, 16 hours and 54 minutes. Page 45

CULTURE

Not our scene: Why have young audiences turned their backs on the theatre? And can a night of murder, mystery and shampoo attract those twentysomethings? Page 32

Spartacus: The British Museum is unveiling a dazzling display of oaks and ash, as well as a painted history of 20th-century design. Page 33

Rising stars: The three members of the Rocke-beats are aged 16, 14 and 8, and this weekend they will share the bill in London with Bill Haley's Comets. Page 33

Heavenly chorus: English National Opera's searing new production of Janáček's *From the House of the Dead* owes a lot to a chorus on top form. Page 34

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FILMS

Geoff Brown reviews *The Peacemaker*, with George Clooney and Nicole Kidman

BOOKS

How Paul Johnson confounded the critics with his history of the Americans

TELEVISION

New look: Fed up with your wardrobe, looks or personality? American image consultants promise makeovers that also save time and money. Page 16

Nigella Lawson: Beauty that beats stripping: why child safety comes first. Page 16

Childcare crisis: Bill Frost investigates and tells the story of one victim. Page 17

Big picture: The man behind Rowan Atkinson's *Bean* says British films rely on luck. Page 22

TV interference: Raymond Snoddy reveals how Norman Tebbit intervened directly as Conservative Party chairman in a row with the BBC Governors. Page 23

Cut costs: Make your home more energy-efficient and win discounts as the Government promotes green housing ideas. Page 41

The arrival of techno music on the international artistic scene has provoked in France, as elsewhere, a burgeoning fear among public authorities, educators, families and even show business professionals who are struggling to control a musical genre that has spiralled out of control, just as rap did. — *Le Monde*

RADIO & TV

Preview: The business of death is the subject of *Witness: LA Coroner* (Channel 4, 9.00pm) Review: Matthew Bond is suspicious of a film about *The Sport*. Pages 46, 47

OPINION

Prodi's short spoon

Behind all the rhetoric about Italy's unmissable rendezvous with monetary union, the clear aim of President Scalfaro and Signor Prodi was to do anything, but anything, to avoid turning to voters. Page 19

Disaster in the making

The erosion of Rio de Janeiro's Copacabana beach may be the most spectacular example of the El Niño effect but it is hardly the most important. Page 19

Er, Minister

The only rational explanation for Britain's enthusiastic adherence to the Dublin Convention is that its negotiators spent three years half asleep. Page 19

ISABEL FONSECA

Numbering some eight million in Europe alone, the Gypsies are not only the continent's largest minority, they are also the fastest growing population in countries with static or negative birthrates. And so Gypsies — and the "Gypsy Problem" — will not go away. Page 18

FRANCIS BECKETT

Mandelstam's ambition is political. His route to Parliament happened to include a spell of spin-doctoring and he found he was rather good at it. But now he is like an actor who wants to play Hamlet and people insist on talking about how good he is in *Coronation Street*. Page 18

PETER RIDDELL

Whatever the format of Downing Street briefings, journalists will always gather information on an unattributable basis. This enables politicians to talk more freely and journalists to provide greater insights. Page 10

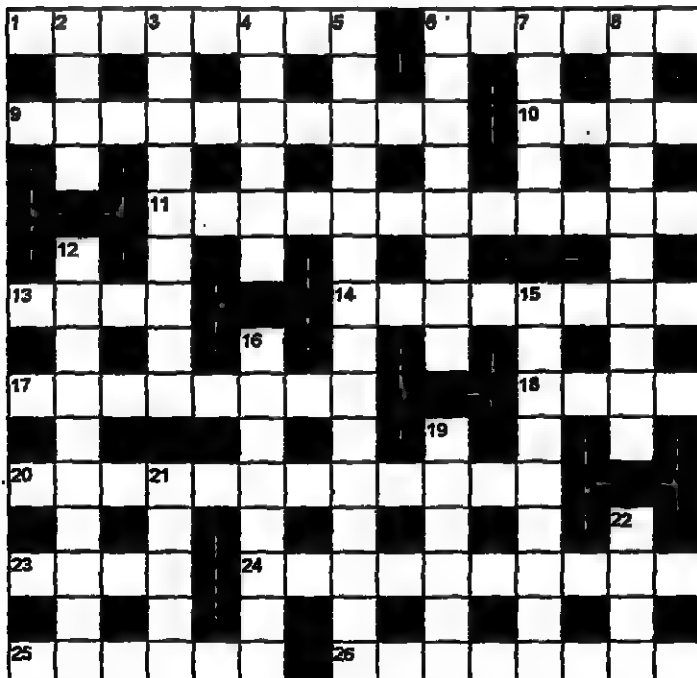
KENNETH WOOD

Inventor of the Kenwood mixer: Group Captain Desmond Scott, New Zealand fighter ace; Sir Gilbert London, former MP. Page 21

NIGERIA: teachers' challenges

Lord Tonypanky; wills; asylum seekers; courts; *Standing Stone*. Page 19

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,617



- ACROSS
- 1 Bold introduction to a meaningful piece of text (8).
 - 6 Booze with soldiers, after clique rejects outsiders (6).
 - 9 Artist missing from Strauss radio broadcast, causing calamity (10).
 - 10 'estate to make a statement (4).
 - 11 Pass on responsibility for Punch very rapidly (4,4,4).
 - 13 One who practises putting on a green, for example (4).
 - 14 Free to play about, neither finishes — a typical case (8).
 - 17 On final course, exercises given to a climber (5,3).
 - 18 Screw forward, going into the pack (4).
 - 20 What's in store for one sort of car in traffic? (5,2,3).
- DOWN
- 2 Give what comes in a going-over? (4).
 - 3 Nag leading drink-driver? (4-5).
 - 4 Doesn't put out the port (6).
 - 5 Fail to mention origins of Hengist and Horsa? (4,4,7).
 - 6 A very hard Times crossword, one hears (8).
 - 7 A couple of pints? Forgetting right time, two females drink a lot (5).
 - 8 Twice, one pass spoiled ideal chance to shoot (4,6).
 - 12 I heard head collaring joker — who saw it? (10).
 - 15 Pizza topping? Go for every possible one! (9).
 - 16 Professional loss adjuster offering revised view (8).
 - 19 Nasty graze beginning to bleed in recent war-zone (6).
 - 21 Some interest in Channel Islands, and one in the Med (5).
 - 22 The beak reveals the charge (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,616

BARKEEPER PINUP
A U P A A A E I
C O N F I R M T A C T F U L
K I L P T I A O
T O N D O H E A D F I R S T
R G E N V I
A R M O U R E R S O L O
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C O M P U Y A C H T S M A N

LONDON ROAD AND WEATHER CONDITIONS

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

Weather by Post

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

World City Weather

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

Motorist

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

AA Car reports by fax

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

HOURS OF DARKNESS

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
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CAN'T CEDAR WOOD FOR THE TREES?

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

OWPA

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

WESTERN PROVIDENCE ASSOCIATION

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

FORECAST

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
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AROUND BRITAIN WEATHER

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
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24 hrs to 5 pm: bright, clear, cold, dry, with light easterly breeze

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
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AROUND BRITAIN WEATHER

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CHANGES TO CHART BELOW FROM NOON: LOW E WILL MOVE NORTH, WITH LOW X RISING; LOW W WILL BE

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Total number of lives saved so far this year: 786

UK Weather: All regions 0230 444 910
UK Roads: All regions 0230 444 910
Index: All regions 0230 444 910

THE TIMES

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TODAY

ECONOMICS

Janet Bush says
Brown must act for
the sake of business
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HOMES

The man who built
an eco-house — and
made it look good
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SPORT

Ferguson calls for
United to
keep up tempo
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TELEVISION
AND
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 22 1997

Pru rebuked for pensions mis-selling failures



Sir Peter: embarrassment

PRUDENTIAL CORPORATION, the biggest provider of UK pensions, suffered a blow yesterday when its regulator issued a public reprimand of its handling of the pensions mis-selling review.

Accusing Prudential of "serious shortcomings" in its ongoing mis-selling investigations, the Securities and Investments Board (SIB) said the insurer had failed to act with "due skill, care and diligence". It went on: "The Prudential, on its own admission, has failed to manage the pensions review as a major project and

has placed too much faith in its line managers and their reassurances." The statement added that SIB was "deeply concerned by the cumulative effects of the Prudential's failures".

The SIB report comes after Prudential missed a series of deadlines for dealing with top priority cases. Two months ago the insurer increased its pension mis-selling provisions to £450 million and revealed it had almost 70,000 priority cases.

At the end of last month Jim Sutcliffe, chief executive of Prudential UK, left the company abruptly and Sir Peter Davis, the group chief executive, took over the running of the UK operation.

SIB has no powers to fine Prudential, but the public rebuke was designed to cause maximum embarrassment to Sir Peter, who recently appeared on television advertisements as "the man from the Pru" to promote its savings and investments products.

It will also embarrass the Government, which in June appointed Sir Peter to head its new Welfare to Work programme. Prudential has already been criticised by Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, who has been "naming and shaming" tardy pension companies.

The Prudential responded by saying it accepted SIB's findings and

pledged that offering redress to customers would be its top priority.

The Prudential is one of a number of pensions companies accused of wrongly persuading around 500,000 people to leave occupational pension schemes in favour of personal pensions.

Sir Peter made no comment yesterday but a spokesman for the insurer said that executives had not been fully aware of how time-consuming the investigation had proved to be. "It was not given the priority it should have been," the spokesman said. "We are very concerned that we have failed to meet agreed targets in our resolution of past personal pension

sales. We have now brought in a new man to run the unit and are being advised by Price Waterhouse. We cannot say whether further provision will be necessary, but we hope the review will be completed by March."

Some analysts suggested that Prudential, which recently retested all 5,500 direct sales staff, might come in time to rely more heavily on sales through independent financial advisers. However, the spokesman for Prudential said: "Our direct sales team is an important part of our business and we have no plans to disband it."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDEXES		
FTSE 100	5252.5	(+14.9)
Yield	3.12%	
FTSE All share	2460.98	(+6.48)
Nikkei	17210.09	(-84.43)
Dow Jones	8022.37	(+100.83)
S&P Composite	967.44	(+11.63)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	59 3/4%	(59 3/4%)
Yield	6.42%	(6.42%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month Interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Libor long gilt	11 1/4%	(11 1/4%)
Future (Dec)	11 1/4%	(11 1/4%)

STERLING		
New York	1.6340	(1.6340)
London	1.6340	(1.6300)
DM	1.6340	(1.6300)
FF	1.6340	(1.6300)
SFR	1.6340	(1.6300)
Yen	160.57	(161.17)
S Index	106.4	(106.3)

NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Dec)	\$18.85	(\$18.78)

GOLD		
London close	\$323.80	(\$324.06)

* denotes midday trading price

RJB plunges as state help is ruled out

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND PHILIP BASHETT

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday ruled out special help for the coal industry when Parliament returns. Early next month a delegation of union leaders and several MPs will meet Mr Budge and Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister.

It is expected they will demand a halt to further approvals of gas-fired power stations. Tomorrow, John Grogan, Labour MP for Salford, will lead a Coalfield Communities Campaign debate on the future of coal. He said: "The conference is designed to bring together a powerful coalition, which can lobby the new Government about the case for coal."

Last week RJB stopped development work at four collieries, indicating a scaling-down of its resources. But a spokesman insisted the company was optimistic over its future despite the sharp warning from Kleinwort Benson and the Government's attitude.

He said: "This is nothing to do with the performance of the company. We are continuing to make efficiencies and are continuing talks with the generators."

Charles Kermot, mining analyst at Paribas, said RJB had a short-term future in the UK but that its longer-term interests were likely to lie overseas.

Richard Budge, chief executive, suffered a personal loss on paper of £2 million on his 3.6 million shares in the company. After the stock-market flotation in 1993 Mr Budge had a shareholding of 3.9 million. In July last year he sold 400,000 shares as part of a buyback when the share price was 580p.

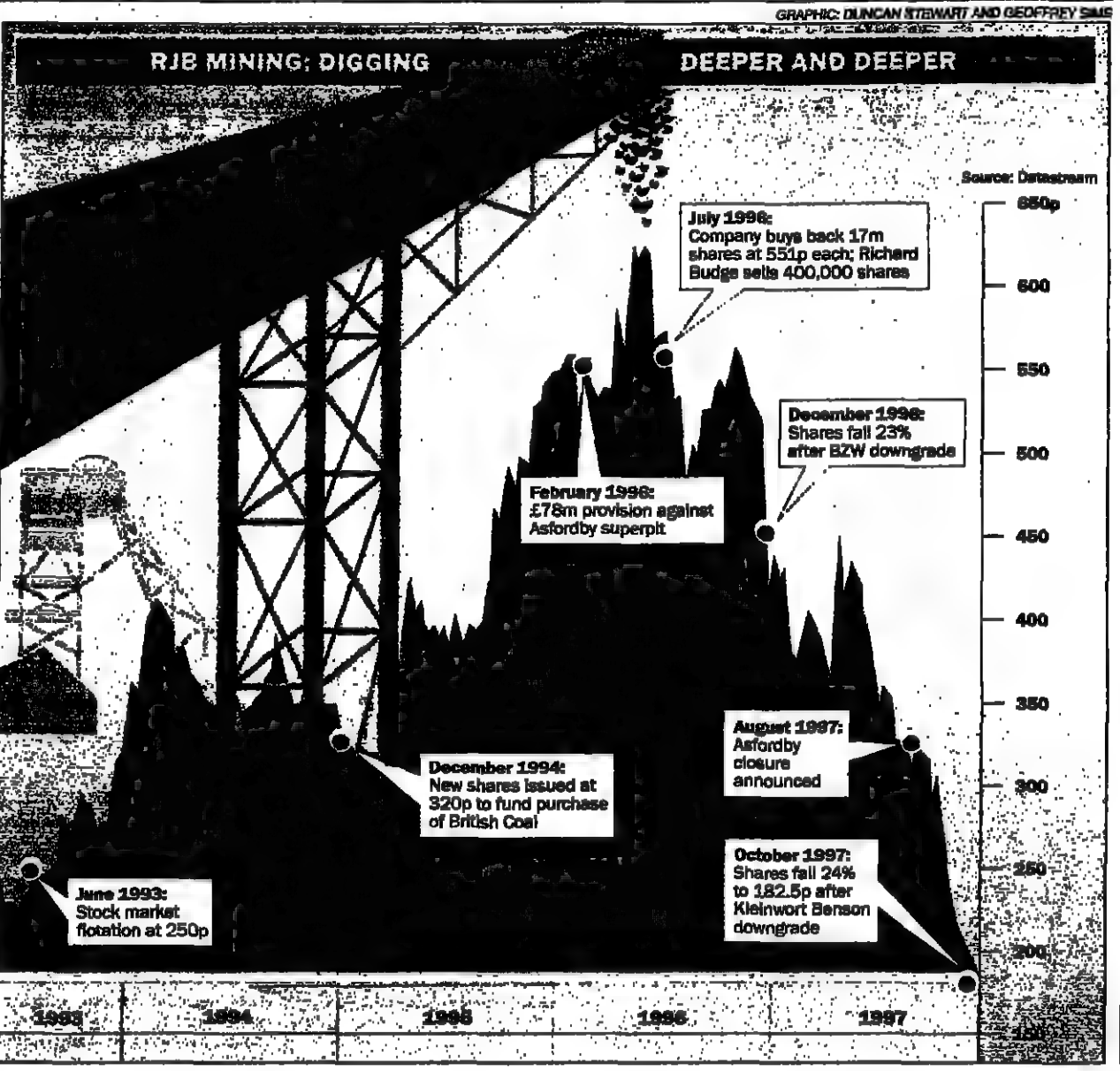
RJB is in talks to secure contracts after the present government-arranged deals expire next March. But no deal has been struck yet and RJB has warned the Government that a new round of pit-closures, with the loss of about 4,000 jobs, is inevitable if there is no effort to curb the use of gas in electricity generation and to support the coal industry.

Mr Budge said that the Government could not tell the generators to "subsidise Mr Budge". He said: "That would be grotesquely unfair to all the other companies who are negotiating contracts."

Kleinwort said it was forced to abandon its previous buy recommendation, partly because Labour was implementing policies that damaged the coal industry. Kleinwort said: "Most worrying not only has it [the Government] further encouraged gas... but it is also prioritising its environmental commitments over and above the wellbeing of the coal industry."

It is expected that Labour backbenchers will increase pressure on Downing Street

Commentary Page 27
RJB's poker game Page 29



Brown faces tough choice

By ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

GORDON BROWN most choose between volatile inflation and tax rises if he presses ahead with plans to join the single currency, a leading economic think-tank claims today.

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research argues that the pound is "grossly overvalued" at current levels and that the Chancellor will need to coax sterling lower before joining EMU.

But the institute says that trying to control the exchange rate through interest rate policy will make hitting the inflation target more difficult as rates are likely to have to be substantially lower.

The Government's only alternative is to use hefty tax rises to compensate for rate cuts, even though fiscal policy is already on a "sustainable basis" and such a policy would break Labour's election pledge not to

raise direct taxes. "By the time Britain does join monetary union the Government will either have to accept an inflation rate likely to be more variable than that delivered by the Bank of England or it will have to be prepared to return to fiscal fine-tuning," the institute says.

It says that at current forward rates the market expects sterling to join EMU in five years' time at DM2.63. Even at this level, the institute says, it would be overvalued, and the Chancellor should aim for around DM2.50.

But the pound yesterday continued to surge boosted by the Government's apparent change of heart on EMU policy. It closed up three pence at DM2.9183 — its highest level since early September.

CBI warning, page 26

H&C to deliver £359m windfall

By CARL MORTIMER

HARRISONS & CROSFIELD, the pet food to chemicals conglomerate, is to return £359 million to shareholders following the disposal of its Harcross builders merchant chain to Meyer International.

The cash return, equivalent to not less than 50p per share, will be achieved by way of a scheme of arrangement, issuing shares in a new company to investors, plus cash or redeemable loan notes.

Bill Turcan, chief executive of Harrissons & Crosfield, said: "This is a radical solution. Our guiding principle is value for shareholders." He said that Harrissons will sell all its other non-chemical assets, including the agricultural businesses, when appropriate values can be realised.

Meyer International is raising £111.7 million in a one-for-four rights issue at 360p per

share to fund the £318 million purchase of the Harcross chain. The deal will double the size of Meyer's Jewson chain, pushing it into the top slot in Britain with 414 branches.

John Dobby, Meyer chief executive, said he anticipated just 20 closures as a result of putting the two chains together to trade under the Jewson banner. Meyer expects to achieve savings of £20 million in the third year, from purchasing and supplies, with the £23 million cash cost of integration being taken at the end of the current financial year.

Meyer estimates that its pre-tax profit for the half year to September 30 was not less than £26 million (£20 million) and the company expects to pay an interim dividend of 4.5p on existing shares.

Tempus, page 28

Zenith goes to law to bar Saatchi move

By JASON NISSE



Walker: "gardening leave"

ZENITH, the media buying arm of Cordiant, yesterday took its former boss, Christine Walker, to court after learning of her plans to join forces with Lord Saatchi, who was ousted as Cordiant chairman nearly three years ago.

Ms Walker, 44, one of the most high-profile women in advertising, resigned from Zenith in January after running the media-buying operation for ten years. Under her £200,000-a-year contract, she was put on "gardening leave". This restriction ends on Saturday.

The advertising industry has been awash with stories that Ms Walker was in talks with M&C Saatchi, the agency

Lord Saatchi formed after being ousted from Cordiant, about setting up a rival media buying operation.

Zenith reacted to these stories, which are understood to have some truth to them, by going to court yesterday to try to enforce clauses in Ms Walker's contract to prevent her from poaching Zenith clients or staff for another 12 months. She responded that the clauses cannot be enforced because they restrict her freedom to work. A court hearing has been set for early November.

Zenith's legal action comes at a critical time for Cordiant, whose shareholders are to vote on its £600 million demerger tomorrow. Ownership of Zenith is to be split 50/50 between Cordiant Communications Group, which will also own the

Bates advertising network, and Saatchi & Saatchi, which will own the advertising agency originally founded by Lord Saatchi and his brother Charles Saatchi.

The action against Ms Walker marks the second time that Cordiant operations have gone to court to try to stop senior staff joining Saatchi. Attempts by Saatchi & Saatchi to stop three of its leading lights — Bill Muirhead, David Kershaw and Jeremy Sinclair — joining the nascent M&C Saatchi in 1995 led to a long legal battle. Saatchi & Saatchi hoped to hold the trio to their notice periods — 24 months for Mr Muirhead and 12 months for the other two — but the courts ruled that these terms were too onerous and freed them from "gardening leave" after six months.

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Blair will not Budge to save mines



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Tony Blair was not at home when a delegation of pit owners turned up at 10 Downing Street last week. He was genuinely otherwise engaged in Dublin, which was just as well, since, had he run into the visitors on their way to talk to the head of the policy unit, they might have fallen on their knees and appealed to the Prime Minister's better nature. Walking past would have been embarrassing.

All the indications are, however, that Mr Blair is steeling himself to the embarrassment of heading a Labour Government which presides over the death of most of Britain's coal industry, and the miners' jobs within it.

And the growing realisation that miners do not have enough votes to matter is causing embarrassment well beyond Downing Street and Smith Square. In particular, there is some squirming in the offices of stockbrokers.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson. This is the firm whose condemnatory circular on RJB Mining helped to reduce the company's value by more than a quarter yesterday. The document shrieked with all the certainty of the convert.

For it was just a few months ago that the same firm produced a deliciously bullish circular on RJB, full of juicy dividend projections and optimistic share price

projections. The broker's view was coloured by the belief that Labour in government would be supportive to the coal industry.

Well, highly paid analysts are expected to take a view on the economic climate within which companies must operate, but their political antennae may not always be tuned to the right wave length.

New Labour is not going to come to the rescue of Richard Budge and his shareholders. The realisation of that has persuaded Kleinwort that instead of profits hitting £147 million in 1999, they will now be doing well to make £62 million that year and could have shrunk to £24 million by 2004.

Now it reckons that the shares are worth no more than £1 but when it issued its buy circular in April, the price was £4.12. Even after New Labour strode into office, it continued to believe that the party would look after the coal industry and, as recently as September, was still recommending a purchase of the shares.

Investors would have been better advised to follow the

example of Richard Budge, who took the chance to offload a parcel of around 400,000 shares in July last year when the price was at the never to be repeated level of 553p. But Mr Budge held onto most of his stock, around 3.5 million shares. His belief Labour would not risk the embarrassment of closing the pits has cost him a fortune.

Brown still left to spin the pound

Under the Tories, joining the euro was a constitutional issue. Under Gordon Brown it is supposedly economic but certainly no simpler. As with most economic reforms, such as joining the exchange rate mechanism, the perils lie on the snake-infested route into the promised land.

The National Institute argues that the problem with the ERM was not joining at a CBI-approved central parity of 2.95 marks but that ERM currencies as a whole were too high in 1990-92. At the time, it seemed rather different. Britain was stuck far in recession because our duty to keep sterling up stopped Norman Lamont cutting interest rates as fast as he should. Sterling certainly went in at too high an interest rate.

The same conundrum would have faced euro entry this century and may well continue into the next. In their latest sectioning of the economy, NIESR's Martin Wheale and Garry Young argue that sterling is overvalued in spite of the seeming health of exports and the lack of an import surge. This is only a matter of time, they say, due to lags caused by hedging currencies. Even

before Mr Brown and his merry men sent the pound back up to DM2.92, NIESR calculated that the UK's pattern of higher interest rates implied that financial markets expect sterling to settle at about DM2.63 in five years time. But allowing for changes in relative labour costs and competitiveness, NIESR reckons DM2.50 might be a fairer parity.

In other words, British consumers might be able to change their pounds for anything between 1.25 and 1.5 euros a time. Given a choice, voters might take a different view from exporters of the best parity.

All this shows how crazy it is to link inextricably with another currency before shadowing it well in advance. This is the only process likely to hasten convergence of economic cycles.

forgetting the euro until the next election. If he wants to consider joining shortly thereafter and keep his options open on rates, he would need to rejoin the ERM in 1999 with central parities markedly lower than today's market price. Try spinning that.

Man from Pru must change his policy

Sir Peter Davis has appeared remarkably impervious to the tongue lashings of Economic Secretary Helen Liddell so there is little reason to presume that a few swipes of the SIB's wet lettuce leaves will chasten him. Yet if the Pru is guilty as charged by its regulator, then he should be feeling a tinge of remorse.

Clearing up the mess created by pensions mis-selling had to be a priority for every firm that had prospered by what amounted to conning customers. But the Pru, according to the SIB, "failed to manage the pensions review as a major project". This is despite the arrival at the Treasury of the feisty Mrs Liddell, who left no

one in any doubt about the priority that should be accorded to the exercise and the timetable that should be met.

The Pru has consistently missed the deadlines for dealing with its backlog of cases. Yesterday the hints from the company were that the change of personnel following the ousting of Jim Sutcliffe might improve things. But if Sir Peter chooses to broadcast to the nation that he is The Man from the Pru, and a guardian angel, then he might have glanced down from on high every so often to ensure that the pensions issue was being dealt with efficiently.

As he maps out the course for the new Super-SIB, Howard Davies needs to find a way to persuade busy chaps like Sir Peter to pay attention.

Dangling carats

After two years of haggling, Russia and De Beers have come to an agreement over diamond sales. Despite both sides' efforts to put a Hatton Garden polish on the deal, it looks dangerously flawed. In theory, Russia will no longer furtively leak gems onto the market, so depressing the price, but less than half its production is likely to go to De Beers. Tracking the rest may keep the De Beers detectives fully occupied for the brief life of the accord.

Pharmaceuticals deliver rapid growth at SB

By PAUL DURMAN

RAPID GROWTH in pharmaceutical sales in the US enabled SmithKline Beecham to deliver another strong set of quarterly figures, with underlying pre-tax profits increasing by 14 per cent to £447 million.

US sales of several of SB's biggest-selling drugs grew by more than 35 per cent, including the antibiotic Augmentin (up 36 per cent), the hepatitis B vaccine Engerix-B (40 per cent) and the antidepressant Paxil (40 per cent).

An ebullient Jan Leschly, chief executive, said: "It was a hell of a good quarter. Our new products were up 41 per cent. Both Augmentin and Paxil/Seroquel have already sold \$1 billion this year."

The strength of the pound took the gloss off the results, pinning back third-quarter, pre-tax profits to £385 million, a 3 per cent rise on last year. After nine months, SB has made pre-tax profits of £1.16 billion. This is a 5 per cent increase on 1996, and equivalent

to a 16 per cent improvement excluding currencies. SB's pharmaceuticals arm increased quarterly profits by 11 per cent to £263 million, ignoring currencies. European sales grew by only 8 per cent, compared to 21 per cent in the US. Mr Leschly said the US healthcare system had recognised that new drugs were extremely cost-effective because they could reduce

other costs of looking after patients. He said regulators took a tougher line on expensive new drugs. "It's a very short-term view," he said. "That will change over time."

Strong sales of Aquafresh toothpaste (up 28 per cent at £79 million) and of the Nicoderm and Nicorette anti-smoking products enabled SB's consumer healthcare division to increase profits by 18 per cent to £119 million. Clinical

Laboratories, the US medical testing business, improved profits by 26 per cent to £24 million — the result of improved efficiency, Mr Leschly said.

SB is involved in several class actions in the US being brought against Fasdin and other similar dieting drugs that have recently been linked to heart valve problems. Mr Leschly said that Fasdin had sales of only £3.75 million.

He had no news on the much larger legal claim being brought against Clinical Laboratories in a dispute about overcharging. SB is contesting the claim.

A third-quarter dividend of 2.205p a share will be paid on December 31, made up of a conventional dividend of 0.98p and a foreign income dividend of 1.225p.

Mr Leschly said that SB is up against tough comparisons in the final quarter of the year, but pledged: "We will still deliver double-digit earnings per share growth."



Jan Leschly, SB chief executive: feeling ebullient

American boost for Wolseley

By ADAM JONES

AMERICAN plumbers and builders dominated the full-year results announced yesterday by Wolseley, the international building materials distributor.

Wolseley saw an 8.8 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £264.2 million in the year to July 31. The company said that the strong pound had reduced profits by £11.3 million.

US distribution businesses contributed more than 50 per cent of trading profits, accounting for £133 million of the £264.2 million total.

John Young, chief executive, highlighted "tremendous organic growth" at Ferguson, Wolseley's biggest US company, but said the growth rate might be difficult to sustain.

The European distribution arm's profits rose 0.7 per cent to £98.5 million amid tough continental markets and the patchiness of the UK recovery. Wolseley expects better performance in the UK this year.

Profits dipped 2 per cent at the manufacturing arm and Wolseley admitted its photographic supplies businesses were being hit by the rapid advances in digital cameras.

A final dividend of 8.1p (7.25p) will be paid on January 30, 1998, making a total of 11.4p per share (10.35p).

Body Shop takes charge in France

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE BODY SHOP is taking direct control of its loss-making French business in an attempt to end a simmering row with its local franchisees, who allege that they have received poor support from the "green" toiletries and cosmetics company.

The complaints range from inadequate supplies and labelling to the imposition of overly high retail prices.

The Body Shop said yesterday that it has given up its six-month search for a French head franchisee to replace GW Management, the British company that has run the French business for the past seven years and which has been the focus of the sub-franchisees' discontent.

Two of the franchisees, who

have now gone out of business, have lost legal cases brought against GW Holdings in the French courts. Two further cases against GW Holdings are pending.

The Body Shop itself will take over running the French business from the beginning of next month. No money will change hands between The Body Shop and GW Management.

"We are now hoping to improve relations with the French franchisees," a Body Shop spokeswoman said. "We want to be able to get supplies to them more quickly, fit new systems, perhaps put our new shop designs into the Paris stores and appoint a French general manager as quickly as possible."

WORLD COVER

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Budgens buys £5.8m 7-Eleven stores

BUDGENS, the supermarkets company, has paid £5.8 million to buy 57 7-Eleven convenience stores from Jardine Matheson, the conglomerate based in Hong Kong. The deal sent Budgens shares up 3p to a record 53.2p (Sarah Cunningham writes).

The stores are currently run under licence from Southland Corporation of

the US. The licence will run out in April next year, by which time the stores will have been renamed. John von Spreckelsen, chief executive of Budgens, said that a name for the stores has not yet been agreed.

Turnover this year for the 7-Eleven stores is expected to reach £55 million, with the stores breaking even, Mr Von

Spreckelsen said that costs should come down under Budgens ownership, so they should quickly move into profit.

He said that Budgens, which has 117 branches, wants to further expand its convenience store operations as well as continue with the planned expansion of its chain of petrol forecourt stores and its traditional Budgens stores.

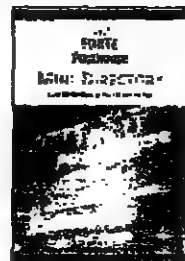
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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Sets increases volatility among blue-chip shares

EVIDENCE has begun to emerge that Sets, the new order-driven trading system, is increasing volatility among blue-chip shares.

Word is that the London Stock Exchange is also coming under intense pressure to provide a central settlement system to cope with the expected surge in trading volume.

One matter that did emerge from recent dress rehearsals was the amount of time being taken up by retail brokers in purchasing transactions. The purchase or sale of large lots of stock under the new system of matching buyers with sellers can result in the broker being forced to arrange settlement with half a dozen different brokers. This takes time and pushes up costs.

There are also signs that the system will lead to sharp, unexpected price movements. That was the case with Bank of Scotland yesterday when the system kicked in at the start of trading. There was a long queue of buyers at one end of the screen, but no sellers ready to offer stock at the other. The result was a 21p rise in the price to 540p after briefly touching 545p.

Share prices generally enjoyed a better session, although they closed below their best of the day. Having opened almost 50 points higher, the FTSE 100 index showed signs of running out of steam towards the close.

This was in spite of a 100-point rally by the Dow Jones industrial average in New York last night. The index in London closed 14.9 up at 5,225.9, with turnover sharply up on Monday's depressed levels at the launch of Sets. A total of 730 million shares had changed hands by the close.

Royal Bank of Scotland failed to make the most of an eagerly awaited presentation, falling 5p to 697p. The company was positive about prospects, but unable to fuel further gains after the recent strong run by the shares.

ICI was 21p firmer at 949 in spite of talk of a profit downgrading by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, before third-quarter results tomorrow. NatWest Markets expects pre-tax profits to plunge from £13 million to £15 million.

RUB Mining fell 50p to 23.5 pence, after a warning that profits could be down 40 per cent by 2004, Pearson, the publisher and



Alan Pearson, left, and John Dobby, of Meyer International

owner of Madame Tussaud's, firmed 3p to 820p after a presentation on Monday on the situation at Penguin publishing.

Harrison & Crofield, 3p better at 134½p, has confirmed the sale of its builders' supplies arm and details of a proposed £399 million cash handout to shareholders. It is pressing ahead with the sale of Harcos to Meyer International.

Shares of the company, which John Dobby is chief executive and Alan Pearson chief operating officer, was down 10p to 400p. The company intends to fund the acquisition of Harcos with a one-for-four rights issue at 360p.

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Greenalls, the pub chain and leisure group, failed to impress brokers on Monday, with the price dropping 5p to 368½p. Last month the group admitted it had taken its eye off the ball after the acquisition of Boddingtons a few years ago and that profits would suffer. This time it has spoken of the difficulty of achieving adequate rates of return from its investment in pubs. Société Générale Strauss, Turnbull says the shares are a "sell".

Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, is the latest to take a negative view of prospects for TI Group, down 14p to 608p. It has downgraded its recommendation for the shares to a "sell" after a similar move by Dresdner Kleinwort Benson.

BICC touched a low for the day of 179p before rallying to close 6p down on the day at 186½p. Merrill Lynch has downgraded the shares to a "sell". A profits warning took its toll at Betacom, down 7p to 40p.

A decision by one director to shares in the company lifted Princeside, the advertising agency, 12p to 137½p. Robin Black, a non-executive director, has bought 20,000 shares for 125p.

PizzaExpress again lost ground finishing 21p off at 799p as directors continued selling shares in the company. In the past few days a group of them, including Luke Johnson, chairman, have sold a total of 618,000 shares.

GIIL-EDGED: It was a day of consolidation in the bond market after Monday's shake-out that stemmed from the uncertainty over the date of Britain's entry into the single European currency.

Prices traded in narrow limits for much of the day before a late sell-off left longer dated issues nursing losses of about 1½%. Index-linked issues scored gains ranging to 1½%.

In the futures pit, the December series of the Long Call finished seven ticks lower at £18½, as a total of 67,000 contracts were completed. In long, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 sold £1½ at £114½, while among shorter dated issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was unchanged at £103½.

NEW YORK: A further rebound in technology stocks powered the Dow Jones industrial average back above 8,000 by midday, when it was 100.93 points up at 8,022.37.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones 8022.37 (+100.93)
S&P Composite 602.44 (+11.83)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average 17,210.09 (+64.42)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng 12,903.10 (+507.70)

Amsterdam:
EEX Index 422.52 (+15.15)

Sydney:
All Ordinaries 2,603.70 (+11.30)

Frankfurt:
DAX 4,134.50 (+48.73)

Singapore:
Straits 1,771.22 (+23.08)

Brussels:
General 1,346.18 (+44.53)

Paris:
CAC-40 2,949.81 (+42.18)

Zurich:
SIX Gen 1,341.30 (+16.03)

Lisbon:
FTSE 30 346.1 (+4.49)

Madrid:
IBEX 35 3,225.9 (+14.9)

FTSE 250 4,916.4 (+40.1)

FTSE 100 5,225.9 (+100.93)

FTSE All-Share 2,603.70 (+11.30)

FTSE Non-Financials 2,603.70 (+11.30)

FTSE Financials 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Food & Bev 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Health Care 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Media 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Telecom 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Utilities 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Real Estate 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Shipping 1,322.9 (+10.08)

FTSE Transport 1,322.9 (+10.08)

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IPUS
number one

Brown needs to act for the sake of business

The nation lives in hope of the body politic returning to something like normality. We are promised that Gordon Brown will soon make an unequivocal statement to Parliament on his single currency policy. The current witch-hunt against spin doctors (brought entirely upon themselves) will die down and attention will revert to the ministers who were elected in May and who are supposed to be running the country. Then, perhaps, Britain can start thinking rationally about what life outside economic and monetary union is going to be like for the next five years.

Any cost-benefit analysis for business is difficult because of the great unknowns ahead. Primarily, but not exclusively, these are macroeconomic. Nobody knows whether the collective jump into the abyss called economic and monetary union will be a success. Will Europe be a deflationary unemployment black spot, controlled by an inflation-obsessed European Central Bank and without the political will to embrace

flexibility and tackle Europe's sources of uncompetitiveness? Or will EMU act as a catalyst for greater growth through structural reform, for deepening the single market, for the creation of super-efficient conglomerates, and for price transparency that will benefit consumers? Nobody knows how the EMU-zone will develop.

Outside the zone, Britain may have a cripplingly overvalued exchange rate and high interest rates at times. Inside, it loses its economic sovereignty and flexibility forever. But it is important for business to move on from these ideological debates to how to react to the euro when it comes.

Even with the possibility of joining the euro dangled ominously in front of them, British companies have been extremely reluctant to invest in the new systems and managerial time needed to prepare. Barclays

Bank's latest survey of British firms who already do business on the continent showed that 65 per cent had done nothing to prepare and, of these, 60 per cent had no intention of doing anything. This appalling lack of foresight — understandable though it is because of the huge costs involved — will now become more entrenched.

Another risk for British business of staying out is that Europe has already started a process of building cross-border businesses with the promise of great economies of scale. British firms are unlikely to be the favoured candidates for takeover or merger. David Owen, of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, believes that the euro-zone will offer much stiffer competition to British firms than in the past. At least within the zone some of our horribly backward engineering companies could be saved at a



JANET BUSH

decent price per share in a takeover. Outside the zone, these companies will simply fail.

The greatest fear of business is that the euro-zone will increasingly make policy which discriminates against those outside. In this context the British Chambers of Commerce and the CBI have this week been clinging desperately to the hope that Mr Brown will emphasise the Government's positive view of EMU at some stage in

the future. Although this introduces yet more uncertainty, it is important to go on making positive noises about the euro in principle and keep hostility from the "ins" at bay.

Now that the Government has made its decision on Europe — at least for this Parliament — the time has come for a hard-headed look at how to maximise Britain's advantages and minimise its disadvantages. One potential negative is an overvalued, volatile currency that makes it difficult for business to plan. Some, including Andrew Sentance, of the London Business School, suggest that Britain should put its understandable prejudices to one side and sign up to an ERM II with wide enough bands to keep some exchange rate flexibility. The theoretical beauty of this idea is that Britain would reassure its European partners that it would not indulge in competitive devalu-

ation. As a Maastricht treaty condition of entry into a single currency, it would also act as a positive statement of intent. It would probably be enough to head off discrimination against Britain by the "ins" and ensure that, if Britain ever decided to join the euro, it would not be on penal terms.

Plainly, this would be difficult to sell to the electorate. But Mr Brown could be doing other things during the period of stability that he now says he wants for Britain after 1999. An analysis of trade flows by Mr Owen finds that Britain has a comparative advantage in services, particularly financial and business services, and in those areas of manufacturing that tend to rely on a high degree of scientific innovation such as telecommunications, pharmaceuticals and computers. Britain is comparatively weak in lower value added manufacturing, notably most engi-

neering businesses. Mr Owen suggests that the Chancellor could improve the odds in Britain's favour by a concerted policy programme improving the competitive potential of those areas where our strength lies. In or out of the euro-zone, this would help British businesses to be winners rather than losers from the single market. He could, for example, introduce research and development tax credits, spend more on education and announce further cuts in corporation tax rates in the transitional period ahead.

The Conservative Party would be bound to campaign against "picking winners" and "old-fashioned Labour interventionism". But Mr Brown has a duty to ensure that EMU is good for Britain as long as it stays out and good for Britain if it ever joins. With a thumping great parliamentary majority, he has the mandate to do whatever he sees fit. Business may not know where exactly it stands on EMU, but at least the Government would be managing the uncertainty to their advantage.

RJB must play a red-hot poker game to salvage its coal mines

Despite pit closures the future for mining is not all black, says Martin Waller

There is a frequent joke in children's cartoons that has a character running over a cliff and then trading happily in mid-air until he or she looks down, notices for the first time the lack of any support — and plunges to the ground.

Some share prices act in exactly the same fashion, trading for months or years at values that have no justification in the real world until the City, collectively, looks down, and they plummet. Yesterday's tumble for RJB Mining shares may have been prompted by a research note from Dresdner Kleinwort Benson that switched from advising clients to buy the shares to advising a sale. But there was little in the note that the market should not already have known, even if it took a worst-case view of the uncertainties affecting the company.

The March 31 deadline that the company faces for the renegotiation of three quarters of its supply contracts to the power generators has been in the diary since before RJB was floated on the stock market even in 1993. Those contracts were brokered by the last Government between the generators and British Coal on terms sufficiently attractive to ensure the latter's successful sale, even at the expense of electricity prices.

They were so-called take-or-pay contracts by which the power industry had to take 28 million tonnes of coal a year, the majority of RJB's output, whether or not there was enough demand for electricity to require the coal to be burned, and to pay for the stuff come what may.

Now, with a competitive market in electricity looming, most of British Coal in the hands of RJB and a new Government in power, the rules have changed. There may be a piquant irony in seeing Richard Budge, the RJB



Richard Budge, chief executive of RJB, will have to play a clever hand in negotiations with power generators

chief executive and epitome of the go-getting Thatcherite entrepreneur, asking Labour to tilt the playing field against the burning of gas because this would gain his company more attractive terms from the generators and higher profits. There may be an equal irony in that same Labour Government using robust free-market principles to justify a refusal to come to the help of the coal mines — and what remains of the National Union of Miners, which was once dubbed "the Goldstream Guards" of the Labour movement.

But these ironies still leave Mr Budge playing a game of poker with the main generators, National Power, PowerGen and Energy Group, a new player in the industry which contains about 12 per cent of the country's generating capacity, along with its biggest electricity distributor, formerly known as Eastern.

The rules of the game are simple enough. The high

pound and the depressed market for coal internationally mean imported fuel is available at 110p to 115p for the amount required to produce a gigajoule of power, the normal benchmark. Whatever happens to sterling, the world market will stay flat because reduced demand from the now deflated Asian "tiger economies" will see to that.

RJB can pull the stuff out of the ground at something approaching 120p a gigajoule and has to negotiate a price above this from the generators to run from next spring to make a profit. Mr Budge has some cards to play; particularly in the Midlands where his pits are near to existing generating plants and so have an inbuilt pricing advantage to the imported product.

Meanwhile, the power industry would gain no benefit from bankrupting his company and causing widespread pit closures by being too tough. The world market for

coal could rise, sterling could fall, or the price of gas could go up. One day, years hence, the industry might again need those closed pits.

There is a parallel with retailers like Marks & Spencer, with a vested interest in allowing their suppliers to remain profitable — if only just.

Charles Kermot at Paribas is the only analyst in the City who studies RJB in any depth and who still has the shares on his buy list, at a price of up to £2 or more. He believes that after a couple of lean years the company should return to reasonable profits. "The generators know they have got to keep RJB in business to supply the coal, so they have to give it a 10 per cent margin."

His profits model assumes Mr Budge achieves 125p a gigajoule next spring, which some might think optimistic.

But he says that even if this price falls to 120p, some inbuilt falls in operating expenses would reduce the cost of production to nearer 110p a gigajoule, so offering RJB the necessary profit margin. That price will not be fixed for the entire duration of the new contracts, allowing for some upwards amendment each year if the market will bear it.

As well as Astorby, the one-time super-pit whose closure attracted unfavourable publicity in the summer, development at three other pits is being stopped. Therefore, these can be run for cash for the next 18 months before a decision has to be taken on closure. This, says Mr Kermot, gives RJB some leeway to ride out the lean years.

His own profits forecasts, however, see pre-tax earnings falling from £192 million this year and £118 million in 1998 to just £45 million in 1999 — on the basis of an unknown outcome to those price negotia-

tions that the company itself says will go all the way to the eleventh hour.

But he says that if the three pits close, RJB will thereafter have just 13 pits, once another now being run down comes to the end of the line. By comparison, a study by NM Rothschild, the merchant bank that handled the sale of British Coal for the Government, suggested then that the industry long-term would have to shrink to 12 pits.

Meanwhile, an ageing chunk of the British nuclear generating industry is coming to the end of its life, which will boost demand for coal generation. "Looking to the year 2000 and beyond, and that is also when those Magnox power stations start closing down, I think RJB actually does have a good future, against a background of rising international coal prices," says Mr Kermot.

Mr Budge has to play a clever hand against the generators first. He has shown some nifty footwork before. He bought RJB out of his older brother's building company, AF Budge, shortly before the latter's collapse prompted a Department of Trade and Industry inquiry. He sold a chunk of his shareholding at 55p in July last year, pocketing a £1.2 million profit, a price that few expect the shares to see again.

Whatever the outcome of negotiations with the generators, the worst may not be over for the shares. There are currently five big City institutions with substantial holdings in RJB of between 6 and 8 per cent. Should the patience of one or more of these finally run out and substantial sales take place, the shares could be over the precipice again.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Virtues of natural gas vehicles merit support from tax regime

From the General Manager, British Gas Natural Gas Vehicles

Sir, Graham Searjeant's thoughts ("Improve our cars, don't ban them", October 16) are, as always, worthy of careful study. But he did not need to squint into the rising sun for inspiration. Toyota's launch of a car operating on both electric and petrol power follows a steady growth in the quest for alternative fuels in which compressed natural gas (CNG) is emerging as first choice for a number of operators, combining practical performance with its credentials as the cleanest fossil fuel.

Factory-built CNG versions of Volvo and Vauxhalls have already been launched, while conversions by British Gas of Ford and Rover are also in use.

Polluting emissions from vehicles in urban areas can — and, indeed, are — being cut by natural gas vehicles, including buses, lorries and vans, as well as cars. Today, no fewer than 32 local authorities and 54 other organisations are operating natu-

ral gas vehicles in their fleets. The prime motive for most public service and commercial operators in looking at alternatives is environmental — reducing air pollution, particularly in the urban street. But operating costs have to be broadly in line with petrol or diesel, or well-intentioned decisions cannot be justified to ratepayers or shareholders.

We, therefore, welcome Graham Searjeant's perceptive comment about the need for fiscal encouragement, as with the shift from leaded to unleaded petrol. Gas has received favourable treatment in three successive Budgets, and there is evidence of growing interest from potential users. We are looking for real market signals that would encourage further investment by industry in making vehicles and the refuelling infrastructure available.

Yours sincerely, TOM GORMAN, General Manager, British Gas Natural Gas Vehicles, 17 London Road, Staines, Middlesex.

Jams are proof of neglect in transport policy

From Mr Harley Sherlock

Sir, Graham Searjeant rightly calls for "cleaner" cars — and buses ("Improve our cars, don't ban them", October 16). But pollution is not our only problem. It is now much more difficult to get around London, or to get goods delivered, than it was 30 years ago. This is a situation that does us no good environmentally, socially or economically, and it is brought about by the policy of successive governments to allow traffic to be controlled solely by its own congestion. If this is an example of what

Graham Searjeant means by "market forces", this Londoner, for one, has had enough of it.

An absolute ban on cars is clearly not politically possible, but using them more rationally and bringing our public transport up to the standards of the rest of northern Europe cannot be delayed any longer.

Yours faithfully, HARLEY SHERLOCK, Andrews Sherlock & Partners (Chartered Architects), 5 Cowcross Street, ECI.

Business letters can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5112.

Fools' gold

STRANGE dealings down on the farm. Genius, the cattle breeder, is refusing to discuss a tentative takeover offer. The business likes to think of itself as the friend of the dairy farmer and a bulwark against those money-grubbing venture capitalists at Alchemy.

Those farmers should note that Genius's directors are not shy of a bit of money-making themselves. They bought shares sold through the firm's clumsy dealing mechanism at a fraction of their current value: 62,000 last year at prices around 50p. Alchemy's

approach values them at around 120p. Richard Wood, chief executive, and three other directors are also showing a nice profit on 215,000 share options priced at close to 50p. Wood says other shareholders were entitled to buy as well. But one fact remains: 50p was a good price for the directors to buy, but 120p seems too low for them to sell.

● METAL BULLETIN has bought a 15 per cent stake in something called Lamp Technologies, which provides Internet services. A strangely low-tech name for a high-tech company. Shouldn't it be called something like Nexus, or Synchron, or even our old friend Xaar? There was once a computer firm called Gandalf, which proves that old hippies tend to end up in computers. Then I learn that Lamp's founder is one Aladdin Abughazaleh.

Ever been ad

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just see a thin column of smoke over Holborn Bars as they burn the originals.

In the bunker

GEORGE WESTROPP, the Deloitte & Touche partner responsible for the press, must be wondering if he is jinxed. When Coopers & Lybrand announced plans to merge with Price Waterhouse, Westropp was at a conference on the Orana off the Channel Islands. He even looked at chartering a helicopter to get back to where the action was. So where is he when KPMG announces its \$18 billion engagement with Ernst & Young? On a golf course in Deal. Perhaps Westropp could provide us with details of his future movements.

● BRITISH AIRWAYS' compulsion to divorce itself from anything remotely British finds no echo in France, it seems. Making a positively Gallic virtue of being — well, Gallic, Air France has turned to the actress Jeanne Moreau, who I seem to recall once modelled as the national symbol, to front a seductive TV commercial. She hushes: "Today, we are undertaking the world's largest, most difficult and most

beautiful conquest: Yours." Consider me duly conquered.

Bank error

REMEMBER Jürgen Schneider, the fugitive German who gave wigs a bad name? At his Frankfurt trial Schneider has admitted faking a DM29 million security for loans. He claims, ingeniously, that the banks must have gone along with his little charade because the bill was so "completely crazy" that a bank professional could not possibly have been deceived by it. Just don't try this defence in London, Herr Schneider.

MARTIN WALLER



Schneider: bewigged fugitive

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[illegible]

Trim whodunnit woos popcorn punters

Can a night of murder, mystery and shampoo attract a new audience to the theatre? Daniel Rosenthal reports

For West End producers and their counterparts in subsidised theatre the question has long been: "How can we attract new and, in particular, younger audiences to our plays?" This year, their search for answers is taking some unprecedented turns.

Off stage, classic and contemporary dramas are being promoted with techniques borrowed from nightclubs and Hollywood: even the Royal Shakespeare Company has launched a poster campaign aimed, it seems, at lads of the most laddish persuasion. On stage, Ben Elton's *Popcorn* and Mark Ravenhill's *Shopping* have persuaded thousands of twenty-somethings to buy their first tickets on Shaftesbury Avenue. Now comes *Scissor Happy*, billed as "an entirely new theatrical experience", and squarely targeted at those who believe drama is stuffy and elitist.

Written by the Comedy Store stalwarts Neil Mullarkey, Lee Simpson and Steve Sweeney, *Scissor Happy* is a British version of *Shear Madness*, the 1980 "comedy whodunnit" which became America's longest-running non-musical stage show. The setting is a hairdressing salon, and the first scene involves conversations between two crimpers and three clients which culminate in the off-stage murder of a concert pianist whose incessant Rachmaninov practice has driven all five to distraction.

When a detective arrives, the audience is invited to "direct" a reconstruction of the opening exchanges. After the interval, stalls and circle can cross-examine the characters, arguing for their innocence or guilt. There may be a different culprit each night.

The Comedy Store trio may bring in *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* fans. But Nicola Burns, production director for Scissor Happy, says the play's producers have a wider constituency in her sights.

"One reason we invested in the show was to attract those people — and I've met plenty of them — who insist 'Theatre's boring!', even though they've never seen a play," she says. That attitude, she believes, coupled with theatre's

middle-class image, represents as great a barrier to audience-building as competition from cheaper leisure alternatives, notably cinema.

"*Scissor Happy* can help to counter this stuffy image. If you don't enjoy your first play, you can be put off for life. But the opportunity to join in the action in a relaxed atmosphere makes this an ideal first theatre experience."

Generating repeat business from theatre novices is one of Burns's main goals, which is where *Popcorn* comes in. *Scissor Happy* patrons can expect to receive a mailshot promoting Elton's comedy about a

"ness" among Elton fans and the controversy about Ravenhill's title make both plays special cases. But, insists Burns, "their success proves young people aren't daunted by price if a play addresses issues to which they relate".

Further evidence comes from the West Yorkshire Playhouse. In April, its high-tech adaptation of Iain Banks's novel, *The Wasp Factory*, was advertised with flyers designed to look like nightclub promotions, and ticketing outlets were set up in Leeds record shops. The result? An unprecedented number of 18-25s turned out. Encouragingly, a sizeable proportion of those same Banks fans bought seats for *Shopping*'s two-week Playhouse run in September.

The country's flagship subsidised companies are not immune to the drive for new audiences. The National is attempting to demolish the price barrier. When Martin McDonagh's *The Cripple of Inishmaan* travelled to Norwich in June, patrons were offered a "satisfaction or your money back" guarantee. Bookings went up and nobody claimed the refund.

Now two "Intro Nights" designed for people who have never been to the National are being planned for 1998. All seats in the three auditoriums would be available for just £5 or £7. Without sponsorship that would mean a loss — or, the National would argue, an investment — of up to £28,000.

The RSC's partial exodus from London in favour of five-week seasons in Newcastle and Plymouth has made audience development an urgent priority, prompting its first television advertising for many years (about £20,000 was spent on 20-second slots in News At Ten in the Tyne Tees and West Country regions). But more TV exposure has come, virtually free of charge, via electronic press kits. These pre-packaged blends of director and star interviews and clips have been part of Hollywood's publicity armoury for years, but are a first for the RSC.

"BBC and ITV regional programmes used the kits extensively," says the director of marketing, Stephen Brown-



Bridget Armstrong prepares to pull in the first-time theatregoers in *Scissor Happy*, the new audience-participation show at the Duchess Theatre

ing. "Their audiences contain thousands of people who haven't seen the company before."

A promotional tactic originally designed to hype blockbuster movies is selling 400-year-old tragedies in Plymouth, while *Popcorn*, a play which could not have been written without the gory excesses of Nineties Hollywood, convinces cinemagoers that theatre might not be so boring after all. How's that for dramatic irony?

Scissor Happy opens at the Duchess (0171-494 5075) tonight

THE PLAYS THAT BRING IN YOUNGER AUDIENCES

- WHICH** London theatres are currently staging shows that attract the under-30s? Using the available statistics, observation and anecdotal evidence we have compiled three lists. The first is of plays which obviously have an appeal for young and first-time theatregoers. The second is of plays that have the potential to be marketed to attract this target audience, often because of their production styles. The third list is of successful plays which nevertheless appear to have little appeal for the younger audience. Musicals, which largely cut across age barriers, have been excluded.
- HOT TICKETS**
Ben Elton's *Popcorn* (Apollo), David Rabe's *Harvey* (Queen's), Patrick Marber's *Closer* (National), Shakespeare's *Othello* (National), Ken Campbell's *Theatre Stories* (National), Reduced Shakespeare Company (Criterion), virtually any show at the Royal Court Theatre
- POTENTIAL YOUTH APPEAL**
Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (Old Vic), Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (Garrick), Mollath's *The Woman in Black* (Fortune), Wilde's *The Ideal Husband* (Giel-
- AND SOME THAT DON'T**
god), Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (National), Arnold Wesker's *Chips With Everything* (National), David Hare's *Amy's View* (National), Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* (Old Vic)
- PREDOMINANTLY WRINKLY**
Snoo Wilson's *HRH* (Playhouse), Hugh Whitemore's *A Letter of Resignation* (Comedy), Christie's *The Mousetrap* (St Martin's), Sophocles's *Electra* (Donmar Warehouse), Yasmina Reza's *Art* (Wyndham's), Tom Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* (National), Harley Granville Barker's *Waste* (Old Vic)

Encore for a tough old bird

She bends her knees, crouches and gives odd, slightly menacing wiggles, as if preparing for a bare-knuckled bout with another Lancashire lass. Her voice jumps from backstreet Blackpool to London posh, turning the simple word "soon" into a three-diphthong journey through spoof Belgravia.

She emits low, loopy chuckles, as if one of the witches from *Macbeth* had mated with a tubercular Woody Woodpecker. Her tongue rolls out and turns tiny somersaults before disappearing back into her pursed mouth. You have to admit that Jean Fergusson's impersonation of the comedian Hylda Baker is terrific.

The one-woman play she has concocted from the Baker files, Baker recordings and Baker memories is entertaining stuff too, though it does suffer from some of the uncertainties of the genre. When you are trying simultaneously to evoke a performer's character,

show her at work onstage and chronicle her background, there is likely to be short change somewhere. In her admirable determination to avoid the plodding "and then, and then" that clogs up many one-person shows, Fergusson left me wanting to know more about the Baker behind the scenes.

Part of the evening she is in an old people's home, feistily clinging on to her status as a star but wishing she could remember her visitors' names. Part of it she spends in her dressing room, signing souvenir photos with a rubber stamp, pouring cheap Scotch into an upmarket bottle, and grumbling to herself as she prepares for an appearance that clearly worries her more than she admits. With reason,



Jean Fergusson as Hylda

too, for she suffers a horrible moment when onstage. The already creased old face crumples in panic and pain as the words of one of her songs utterly elude her.

Fergusson gives us a portrait of a tough old bird in decline, the more touching because of her perfectionist

professionalism. She also offers plenty of Baker's trademark Malapropisms — "I was so excited I could have had a coronary thrombosis" — and quite a lot of her humour. On feeling low: "I've been breathing all day, and I don't think it helps." Of the London Underground: "Wouldn't it be awful if the driver missed the 'ole?" They are the sort of everyday remarks you hear on the bus, but raised to a new level of batty whimsy.

Her father, a comedian who died slowly but horribly of the after-effects of a bang on the head, was clearly the key influence. But what of her mother, six siblings, and the unsatisfactory-seeming men in her life? It's true that Hylda Baker valued her work above all, seriously neglected her relationships, and ended up a lonely woman. You still feel there is a lot of her story waiting to be told.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

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- Ascending Parachutes, in the multi-activity section, should read half a day, not one day. Also included in these activities are aerobics and 4x4 blindfold driving.
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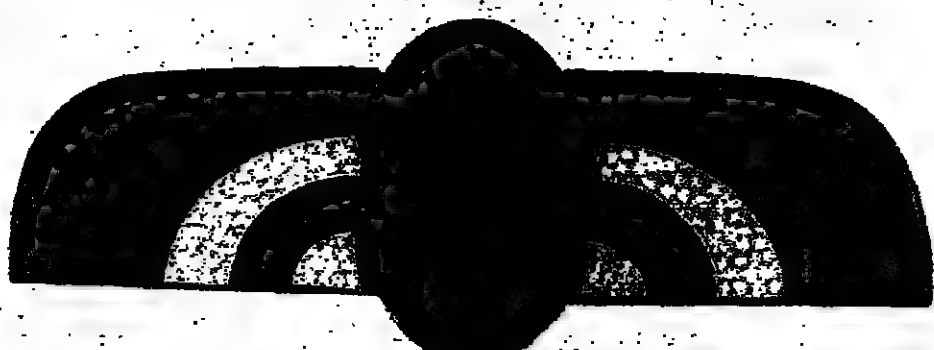
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The dazzling Cartier show at the British Museum offers a potted history of 20th-century design, says John Russell Taylor



Winged scarab brooch incorporating Ancient Egyptian faience made for Cartier in 1924

Mirror to the beau monde

The very word "Cartier" is intensely evocative. But of what, precisely? Great riches, of course. Those diamonds that are reputed to be a girl's best friend. The Duchess of Windsor and her famous collection of trophies. And much more in the same vein. But art? Ah, there's the rub. All the usual associations of Cartier products suggest enormous wealth, of course, but possibly, well, just the tiniest bit of vulgarity as well.

If that is the view which the dazzling Cartier exhibition at the British Museum is meant to combat, it succeeds beyond all expectation. Not only is the validation right — you could hardly do much better for an exhibition than to have it first at the Metropolitan Museum in New York and then at the British Museum — but the show itself proves to be all about art. Only in the footnotes — on who owned what, and where and when it wore their prizes — is it about society and display.

The period covered is 1900-1939, the heyday of the firm as a creative force. The company was actually founded in 1847, but it did not move into designing and manufacturing its own product until the end of the century. The famous shop in the Rue de la Paix followed, and after it branches in London and New York. A legend was born.

The first thing the show makes clear is exactly why Cartier has never seemed to have much independent artistic standing. It is because the firm never had a house style. If you mention Fabergé, Tiffany, Lalique, a clear image springs to mind. In fact, Fabergé had several related house styles (it was certainly not all imperial

Easter eggs). Tiffany worked in many styles after the sort of Art Nouveau which the very name conjures up, and Lalique was important in jewellery, only briefly, before all the firm's energies were taken up with art glass. But correct or not, the unifying image is there. With Cartier there is nothing comparable.

No doubt that has been unfortunate for serious reputation-building. But as far as purchasers are concerned an automatic identification with the ultimate in luxury can hardly do any harm. And the situation does wonders for the exhibition.

Since Cartier, from its manufacturing beginnings, was stylistically a feather to each wind that blows, what we find ourselves receiving is little less than a potted history of 20th-century design. Virtually every fashion that moulded the face and figure of the beau monde in the first half of the century is reflected. Not much of Forties austerity, to be sure, but Utility jewellery was hardly in Cartier's line.

The first thing to stand out is what the catalogue tactfully calls "the Russian style". Since it was really in vogue between 1906 and 1918, it is not surprising to find that this is really a polite way of saying imitation Fabergé. Cartier's client list for the 1900s is virtually identical to that of Fabergé, featuring



Powder box and lipstick tube with lacquer plaques, 1927

all the same Russian nobles who were presumably buying such precious knick-knacks as carved animals and flower-pieces made up from semi-precious stones to give to one another. Cartier's flower pieces were usually contained in small glass cases, Fabergé's not, but otherwise it would be impossible to tell them apart.

This phase of direct imitation was fairly short-lived, however. After the Russian revolution Cartier had for obvious reasons very much taken over Fabergé's role in the fashionable world, and there were no real competitors

in their chosen field. Instead, there were outside events to trigger stylistic change. The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 was evidently one of these, though the exhibition makes it clear that this only intensified something already in existence, right through from the large Franco-Egyptian exhibition at the Louvre in 1911.

In any case, exoticism was in. The colourful oriental extravaganzas in the repertoire of the Diaghilev Ballet, first seen in Paris in 1910, helped to inspire Indian and Persian collections, and the number of fabulously rich Indian poten-

tates among Cartier's customers also had something to do with it.

The most important pieces in the Chinese or Japanese style date from slightly later, mostly well into the Twenties, and accord very closely with the tastes promulgated in the Paris Exposition des Arts Décoratifs of 1925, which encouraged greater simplicity of outline and subtlety of colour, the pale green characteristic of the fine jade used in so many Cartier pieces being a colour particularly favoured, along with coral pink and black.

Between the wars, the spe-

cial relationship of Cartier with diamonds is much in evidence. A whole section of the show is devoted to the art and craft of deploying diamonds to maximum effect. It is hereabouts that the big-name clients come to the fore, from Barbara Hutton to Gloria Swanson and even, belatedly, the Duchess of Windsor.

Those who are not totally in thrall to the material may well feel that the gossip value goes up as the aesthetic interest declines. For what, really, can diamonds do except glitter and be gay? On the other hand, the Thirties do bring in also a fascinating element of Surreal-

ism, especially through the influence (on clients and so, indirectly, on Cartier's practice) of Elsa Schiaparelli.

For the "Treasures" audience the Cartier show is a must, with oohs and aahs at every step, not to mention the many insights offered into the lives of the rich and famous, if not necessarily the great and the good. But with its incredible variety of material and its mass of documentation, it is something no one seriously interested in the history of design can afford to miss.

Cartier is at the British Museum (0171-636 1555) until Feb 1, 14.50, coins £3



Pair of love birds, 1910

Raw 24-carat emotion

IN AMERICA, where she has sold six million copies of her first album, *Pieces of You*, and graced the covers of *Time* and *Rolling Stone* magazines, Jewel Kilcher has long, outgrown the intimate, coffee-house environment in which her talent was nurtured. Yet her music and presentational style remain every bit as straightforward and unvarnished as they have ever been.

On the opening night of a European tour, which will finish at the Shepherd's Bush Empire on November 14, the blonde 23-year-old singer and songwriter from Alaska performed with a directness of expression that was at times disconcertingly intense.

Striding wordlessly on to the Bloomsbury stage, she strapped on one of the two acoustic guitars which, bearing just one song, provided the sole accompaniment to her voice for the entire set. "Don't

POP

walk too close/Don't breathe so soft/Don't talk so sweet/Don't sing," she sang.

Once the ice was broken, she became more chatty, prefacing certain songs with jokey recollections of traumatic performances in the past, such as the time she faced 1,000 kids in a downtown Detroit high school who were expecting to see the rap act Jettie.

Her voice combined girlish incoherence with womanly wisdom as she negotiated lyrics which often led her to emotional extremes. But the lighter moments — such as *Morning Song*, and an a cappella version of Cole Porter's *Too Darn Hot* — were inevitably eclipsed by the

darkest side of her muse. "Gonna rip your heart out the way you did mine, Daddy/Go ahead and psychoanalyse that," she sang in *Daddy*, a song of uncontained, anti-paternal fury.

Even more powerful was her performance of *Foolish Games*, the song which, after an unbelievable chart run of 48 weeks, still sits in the American Top Ten. Accompanied by a pianist, she sang it without the guitar round her neck, and her whole body became convulsed with distraught emotion. "In case you failed to see this is my heart bleeding before you/This is me down on my knees," she wailed.

Perhaps on paper this all looks over the top, but it was hard not to be engulfed by the vortex of raw feeling that she created.

DAVID SINCLAIR

Tour of Jacobite duty

PROLIFIC though he is — to an extent that makes you wonder how Joseph Haydn could have been so idle — Sir Peter Maxwell Davies always finds something in the nature of the project to engage his interest and to stimulate music with its own, in one way or another, distinctive integrity. In his latest work, first performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and SCO Chorus with Maxwell Davies himself in Glasgow and Edinburgh last week, the distinction is not so clear.

Given the subject and the composer's adoptive Scottish credentials, there was every prospect that *The Jacobites Rising* would be a passionate or, at the very least, dramatic score. Indeed, it was received with such evident enthusiasm in the Queen's Hall concert that one must conclude that it does have something of that kind of quality. But to an outsider it just wasn't there.

From the opening chorus, with words from Muir's *Dream* and *Thing* both awkwardly set and awkwardly

CONCERT
SCO/Maxwell Davies
Edinburgh

that awarded to the four soloists apparently on nothing more significant than a fair-shares-for-all kind of basis, there is little that is illuminat-

ing and much that is frankly dreary. The probability is that the texts — compiled not by the composer but by Sir Alistair Grant (who commissioned the work) from Edwin Muir, Wilfred Owen and Sorley MacLean as well as 18th-century and traditional sources — are too disparate to have stimulated the underlying consistency in style or atmosphere or musical language which could have made

the work a coherent and vital experience.

Maxwell Davies does, however, know how to get the best from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra — which made amends for the unwise decision to expose its strings to Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* without a conductor in the first half of the concert — and he commanded all due attention from the SCO Chorus and the four vocal soloists, Lysa Tyrell, Margaret McDonald, Neil Mackie, and David Williamson-Johnson.

GERALD LARNER



GREAT BRITISH HOPES Rising stars in the arts firmament THE ROCK-A-BEATS

Who? The Leeds-based McGowan brothers, Craig, 16, Ray, 14, and Neil, 8, who claim to be the youngest rock'n'roll band in the world.



Bit of a 1950s name for a young band, isn't it? That's the whole point. Despite their youth the Rock-a-beats play rock'n'roll from the classic era, which is how they have just landed a gig supporting Bill Haley and the Comets.

Surely he's dead? Well, yes, but the band is still rocking, combined age 379 years, compared with 38 for the Rock-a-beats. The world's oldest and youngest rock'n'roll bands share the bill at Camden's Tennessee Club on Saturday.

Isn't eight a bit too young for all that? Neil, or "Little Red", is a confident young man. "I play lead guitar. I've been playing about six months and I had lessons so I know all the chords." Ray plays bass while Craig takes care of percussion.

How did they get started? "It's funny because Mum and Dad can't even play a triangle, but they love rock'n'roll and we grew up listening to it. Eddie Cochran and Gene Vincent are the best," says Ray.

Come on, isn't it all a bit of a stunt? "Fraid not. They have already supported Marty Wilde and Alvin Stardust, appeared on BBC Television's *Blue Peter*, and their first album is out in December on Polytone Records.

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Applications, including a curriculum vitae and the names of two referees should be sent to Graham Williams, Administrator, Department of Human Communication Sciences, University College London, Chandler House, 2 Wakefield Street, London WC1N 1PG by 7th November 1997. For further information, call 0171 804 4306.

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Closing Date: December 4th 1997 at 5pm.

If you do not hear from us by December 4th, 1997 please consider that your application has been unsuccessful.

Only those applicants who meet the criteria stipulated above will be considered for this position. If selected you will be required to go through an Embassy security investigation prior to appointment and provide educational certificates and documentation to support your right to work in the U.K. in accordance with the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996.

The American Embassy is an
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PRO ACTIVE PA

Chelmsford £18,000 p.a.
If you are an organised 20s and looking for a job where your initiative, creativity and skills will be valued this is it! Small organisation dealing with anything from builders bills to interior design! Great fun! Call us now!

PA IN TV £17,000 p.a.
Young, bright, self-motivated PA to look after creative person making programmes in Dorchester. Lots of travel, meetings, presentations etc. Never a dull moment! Call us now

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New, pioneering 'business school' for the not-for-profit sector, founded by Lord Young of Darlington, seeks

Team Administrator and Secretary up to £18,000

Hard-headed and high-minded person required to help a small, fast-moving team work effectively. You will deal with students, lecturers, leading national voluntary organisations, press, funders and the public, as well as providing secretarial and administrative support to the Director and other staff. The School is set to expand in future years, and you will be fully involved in its growth.

Further info available from James Smith, School for Social Entrepreneurs, 18 Victoria Park Square, London E2 9PF.

Telephone:
0171 680 6806

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Fax:
0171 782 7586

HIGH PROFILE £24,000

1.1 PA for head of insurance company with a BIG future! Unusual opportunity to assist this busy desk. Lots of travel, liaising and forthrighting. Excellent opportunity for committed, German speaking secretary. 55wpm typing.

Please telephone 0171 628 9529.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

PA WITH GERMAN £24,000

The MD of this dynamic financial PR company will really depend on you to organise his busy desk. Lots of travel, liaising and forthrighting. Excellent opportunity for committed, German speaking secretary. 55wpm typing.

Please telephone 0171 628 9529.
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- Up to £12 an hour
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- Bonuses
- Holiday pay
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INTERNATIONAL PA £22,000

This very senior individual in an American based company needs a right hand person. Your dynamic personality and your innovative approach to your work will perfectly complement his entrepreneurial flair. 55wpm.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.
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HUMAN RESOURCES £22,000

+ full banking benefits. This extremely sociable West End bank need a team oriented PA to fully support Head of HR and help run the department. Experience of training / recruitment administration and setting up systems essential. 60wpm typing. Good powerpoint and word.

Please telephone 0171 495 2321.
Elizabeth Hunt
RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

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RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

SOCIAL SECRETARY ON PICCADILLY...

£17,500 + Bonus + STL + Pens

Exciting, ambitious individual sign up for this position. The role is a mix of social and administrative duties. You will be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget.

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6HP
Telephone: 0171 734 7341 Facsimile: 0171 734 7340

MAINE-TUCKER
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Fluent French Horse-Racing PA

£25,000 + great bonus + travel in Europe & USA

With a background in the horse racing industry, you will be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget.

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6HP
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RECRUITMENT CONSULTANTS

JUST A LOVELY BOSS....

c. £19,000 + Bonus + Pens + STL + Med

If you are a person of modest means, you will be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget. You will also be responsible for the day to day running of the office, including the reception of clients, the preparation of reports, and the management of the office budget.

18-21 Jermyn Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6HP
Telephone: 0171 734 7341 Facsimile: 0171 734 7340

Aldrich & Company

MARKETING ASSISTANT

£19,000 + BANK BENS

This dynamic investment bank needs a bright, confident team player to support the Media and Communications Coordinator and young Sales team. If you want a 'fun' role working to deadlines, masses of liaison with US offices and helping to produce marketing communications and presentation materials this is ideal. Good written and computer skills required. Call Alex Gaze.

CITY RECRUITMENT
Tel: 0171 588 8999 Fax: 0171 588 8998

Aldrich & Company

PA TO MANAGING DIRECTOR

£25,000 + BANK BENS

Provide full 1:1 support to a dynamic MD (Head of Department) in a leading international investment bank including extensive travel arrangements, meetings, diaries, letters etc. You will also act as a Committee Secretary involving liaison with clients, personnel and line managers. You must be professional with a sense of humour and first class skills. Call Sarah Turnbull.

CITY RECRUITMENT
Tel: 0171 588 8999 Fax: 0171 588 8998

SEC/PA

£22,000 + Bonus

For small but expanding Market Property Services Co. working for MD & 2 Directors (70%+10%+10% respectively). Wonderful opportunity of working for a team with a vision for the future. A friendly, happy, professional team. Using MS Office, Excel & Powerpoint, having experience with clients and the ability to produce. A busy, happy, professional team. Call Sarah Turnbull.

1711 1711 1711 1711

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25k - TRUE PA
25k - GRADUATE CALIBRE
25k - PA TO CEO
15k - TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR

EUROPEAN COMMUNICATIONS

£20,000

A leading international firm of Management Consultants based in Central London requires a senior secretary to work within its European Communications team. The role will involve the preparation of presentations for European conferences and seminars, as well as the organisation of such events. This young team travel extensively and therefore the ability to utilise your initiative and successfully manage the office in the absence of the Managing Director is a pre-requisite. You will have previous experience working in a large, professional organisation, have at least 5 years' experience and be confident on Word & PowerPoint. To be considered for this and other challenging secretarial positions please call us now.

0171 814 0800
Angela Mortimer

EXCEPTIONAL SECRETARIES

Excellent Opportunities in the City

Price Waterhouse is one of the world's leading providers of professional services, with a reputation for serving top-tier global businesses. To maintain this reputation they are very selective in the recruitment of staff.

Due to continuous growth and expansion, they are currently undertaking a recruitment drive to attract high quality Partner and Management level secretaries and have many exciting opportunities to offer new employees. Commitment to staff is demonstrated by investing in their development and working closely with individuals to realise their full potential. They are looking for bright, capable candidates with:

- Secretarial experience at Manager or Partner/Director level
- Experience in using MS Word for Windows (Powerpoint/Excel)
- Typing speeds in excess of 60wpm
- The ability to organise and prioritise effectively
- A professional approach to work

In return they can offer highly competitive salaries, an excellent range of company benefits and progressive working practices.

If you are eager to take on challenging roles within this dynamic international organisation, please contact our recruiters Tracey Valmont or Vanessa Mills on telephone 0171 430 0632 or FAX 0171 242 2338.

The Susan Mills Portfolio

Price Waterhouse

are you game?

Administrator/Secretary
£16,000 + benefits

GORDON YATES

WEST END: 0171 494 4499 CITY: 0171 494 4499

PA to Vice President

£22,000 + benefits

GORDON YATES

WEST END: 0171 494 4499 CITY: 0171 494 4499

PA small company.

£21,500 plus bonus

Superb opportunity to work for two charming bosses in this small and friendly financial company. You will provide full secretarial and admin support in addition to working as part of a small team of secretaries. You will have a cheerful and flexible approach to your work and have the initiative to be able to man the fort in their absence. Shorthand 70+ essential. Hours 9 - 5.30. Please call Kate Bromet on 0171 380 7000.

Crone Corkill
Phone Recruitment Staff

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

£15,500 + Bonus

Are you looking to join a company that will recognise your potential, value your hard work and colleagues who will quickly become friends? An immediate interview awaits you if you have 50wpm typing, knowledge of Windows and at least one year's secretarial experience. If you enjoy a high degree of client contact, preparation of sales documents and lots of administration - call our office and let us know!

INTEREST, INVOLVEMENT & SOCIAL LIFE ALLOWED

Up to £22k + Superb Bonus

Stick in a hat, career going nowhere - well now you have no excuse for not doing anything about it! Make Christmas easy and call me to find out more about this fabulous position. You could be looking at a new and varied role including preparation of presentations, assisting with marketing new launches, organising travel arrangements and much more. Top benefits, prestigious international company and you can all be home in time for your favourite soap!

PETITE AND FRIENDLY! UP TO £18k + Bonus

This easy going boss will get his own rewards within this small prestigious company. Impressive offices based at Hyde Park Corner. Accuracy, 60wpm shorthand and proficiency on Windows and Excel are paramount as well as being happy to deal with a list of correspondence. This is for you if you can fit into a small company, have a polite work history and are possibly looking for your second job.

PAN EUROPEAN RECRUITMENT

TEL: 0171 734 8484
FAX: 0171 734 8501

PROMISES YOU CAN RELY ON!

We make you promises that you can take straight to the bank. We rely on you, the highly motivated professional, and you can rely on us to give you the service that you deserve.

Many interesting opportunities
Optimum rates
Numerous temp to perm opportunities
Exceptional loyalty benefits
You deserve us!

If you are aged 18-40, have good MS Office (or advanced WordPerfect 5.1) excellent audio and, if possible, shorthand skills - do yourself a favour, CALL THE BEST IN TOWN!

PA OPPORTUNITIES

GLOSSY MAGAZINES £18-20,000
Excellent opportunity for a PA to the Head of Communications with a large well known magazine publishing house. Duties include dealing with the media, liaising with editors, publishers and organising meetings. The role is hectic but friendly and fun place to be. Must be a first class PA with at least 8 years' experience, have superb secretarial skills and ideally shorthand.

ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS COMPANY £18-20,000
Senior Event Manager of a leading and well reputed entertainment and events company seeks a PA. Usual PA duties as well as involvement in event management. Must have 60wpm typing, shorthand useful. West London.

PR AGENCY £20,000
Director in a well known financial PR agency is seeking a bright and highly experienced PA to work in friendly office. Must have at least 2 years' secretarial/PA experience and a proven interest in PR. Must have excellent secretarial skills and ideally be familiar with Powerpoint.

Please fax CVs to Juliette Wood.
47 New Bond St, London W1Y 6HA
Tel: 0171-493 8181 Email: Julie@jw171.com

SENIOR SECRETARY/DATABASE MANAGER

Up to £20k Central London

We have a new opportunity for a senior secretary with good Access database experience to join our growing company. We are a small recruitment business specialising in senior management recruitment in the retail and service industries. This is a very 'people' focused environment. Your secretarial work will be based around CVs and candidate profiles and much of the telephone work is dealing with interview arrangements. Previous experience in a recruitment or personnel environment would be an advantage.

We use Microsoft Office 97 software, so we need someone with good Word and Access skills. Ideally you will also be numerate and have some Excel spreadsheet experience. Your telephone skills must be well practised, as you will be a key contact for both clients and candidates, who expect a friendly, efficient and professional service. We are always busy, so typing speed and high attention to detail will be important. A sense of humour to cope with our really mad days will be essential!

Our Access database on clients and candidates is really impressive and you will be responsible for its day to day upkeep and also solving problems, working with a programmer to enhance the system. If you enjoy database work, this could be the ideal position for you.

Please send your CV with current salary details to: Jane Anderson at Tarpey Clark, 1 Bickenhall Street, London W1H 3LA. Telephone 0171 470 5120. Fax: 0171 470 5101.

TARPEY CLARK

FIRST CLASS SECRETARY OF SMART APPEARANCE

Required for Managing Director of small, busy London office of a large organisation. Applicant should have at least 10 years' experience and be capable of working on their own initiative. Accounts background and good communication skills are essential.

Must be computer literate with excellent shorthand and typing speeds and have an enthusiastic and flexible attitude. Attractive salary to right applicant.

Please send CV to: Farquhar Limited, 235 Bickenhall Mansions, Bickenhall Street, London W1H 3DD. Attention Mrs P S Dean. No agencies please.

CHAIRMAN'S PA

£23,000 a year

Chairman of West End based Corporate Finance company requires a PA/Secretary to help organise his busy office.

Shorthand and Microsoft Word an advantage. A friendly and flexible approach essential.

Interested applicants should apply in writing to: Helen Rook (fax 0171 935 4171) CFA PLC, 1 Duchesne Street, London W1M 3DE.

Advertising agency P.A. to M.D.

Unique opportunity for self-motivated, enthusiastic, personable person to join dynamic team. In addition to secretarial, admin, and co-ordinating, the successful candidate will be able to compare own correspondence, liaise at director level with clients, work on own initiative and you receive a good team player's bonus a busy work environment. Previous experience a must.

Apply in writing with full CV, together with details of: last salary, marital status and confidential to: Managing Director, Rawlings London, The Gilt House, Sotheby Market, Clark Farm Rd, London NW11 8AH.

Star Buy SECRETARY

Purchasing Department
c.£15,000

Our Purchasing Department's Secretary has been promoted and we need another star to provide a comprehensive secretarial service to the Purchasing Director and his team. This will involve helping to organise the department, liaising with outside suppliers, arranging meetings and a considerable amount of audio typing. Because the department is very busy, and you'll have contact with all levels of people, you must be articulate, confident and unflappable. You also need to be thoroughly familiar with Word 6 and Lotus 123.

If you're the person we've described, you can expect star treatment. As one of the UK's leading leisure companies, we can offer excellent benefits and opportunities to progress. To apply please send your CV to: Debbie Foster, Corporate Personnel & Training Manager, First Leisure Corporation PLC, 7 Soho Street, London W1V 5FA. Closing date: Friday 31st October 1997.

Aspiring to be an equal opportunities employer.

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RECRUITMENT TO THE FINANCIAL SECTOR

A leading provider of recruitment services in the financial sector, we are looking for individuals who are motivated, hard working and have a proven track record in the financial industry. We are looking for individuals who are motivated, hard working and have a proven track record in the financial industry. We are looking for individuals who are motivated, hard working and have a proven track record in the financial industry.

Salary £15,000 - £20,000 per annum + benefits. Part time considered - salary pro rata.

Please apply with CV and details of current salary to: Osbourne & Little, 1111 Victoria Park Industrial Estate, London NW10 7EX.

WILDE SAPTE

Float Secretarial Open Evening

27th October 1997
To £22,000 per annum + PRP + Benefits

We are Wilde Sapte, a 600-staff City law firm with a prestigious and expanding international client base. We are hosting an open evening on 27th October 1997 to give you the chance to view our award-winning offices and meet existing members of staff to discuss opportunities to join our Float Secretarial Team, which is well-regarded for its versatility and commitment to quality service.

We are looking for:

- commercially aware professional secretaries with a flexible approach
- minimum 5 GCSEs (grades A/B) or equivalent, including English
- a recognised secretarial qualification
- experience gained in a professional services (ideally legal) organisation

Some of the benefits we can offer you:

- attractive salary and holiday package
- private medical cover
- staff restaurant
- Word 7 information technology training

In addition, we are looking for a Spanish-speaking secretary for our Lloyd's office.

If you would like to come along to the Open Evening from 5.00pm onwards, call Rebecca Dewhurst or Sue Barnes on 0171 246 7000. If you are interested but unable to attend please send your CV with a covering letter to the Personnel Department, Wilde Sapte, 1 Fleet Place, London EC4M 7WS.

Bilingual English/German Secretary

required to work as part of a team in small city law firm of Solicitors and German lawyers (Tower Hill/So. Katharine's Dock).

Legal secretarial experience not essential.

Salary £17,000+ (part time considered - salary pro rata)

Tel: 0171-702 4661.

TIME SADDERS

IF YOU have a database which is more than about one megabyte in size — check this by right-clicking with your mouse on the file and choosing properties from the pop-up list — and you add data to it regularly, it is worth compacting it.

Compaction will both reduce the size of the actual file and reorder the data in it to make access quicker.

If you're using Microsoft Access, first close the database you want to compact and make sure no one else is accessing it across your office network. Then choose Tools/Database Utilities/Compact database.

A dialog box will open in which you can either type the full path and filename, eg. c:\access\databases\company.mdb, or use the Browse button to find it. Access will automatically assign a new name to the output file. Click on Compact and then on Save to save the newly compacted file. This can take some time.

You may want to keep both copies for a while to allow you to test the efficiency of the compaction.

CHRIS WARD

Success a matter of course

Susan MacDonald meets an expert team leader and a secretary in training

Sarah Pugh's career is a success story. As the PA to the Principal of Lewisham College, southeast London, she is not only a senior secretary working for a "role-model boss" but also runs a team of secretaries and works in an organisation that trains secretaries.

Ms Pugh, 38, is clearly top-notch and an expert at working in teams. "Never underestimate the amount of thinking time you need," is one of her golden rules. She has an impressive list of qualifications. She did a two-year course in the 1970s at Wolverhampton Polytechnic (now University) and came away with a degree in languages — French and commercial Russian — and learnt both French and English shorthand. She worked for a time in France, since she was unable to find a bilingual job in Britain, before returning to London to work for the French bank Paribas. She admits that she has never needed her Russian so far.

She gave up work when she married and had children — two boys now aged ten and seven — and decided to ease her way back nearly four years ago by taking a temporary job at Lewisham College, near where she lives. Now she is permanent, is PA to the Principal and leads three teams: two internal and one external.

"When I started, numerous secretaries had come and gone and there were no systems in place. No filing had been done for eight years." She looked at what was needed and built a secretarial team to cope with the

work. She then designed a range of recruitment tests, created the office environment that was needed and developed a standards manual for all college documentation.

Some people feel their skills are not recognised, but her gifts for planning and organising were acknowledged to the extent that she found she was given more and more work to do. Ms Pugh is now chairwoman of the PA group which meets alongside the League for Innovation, at which ten of the UK's most innovative colleges seek to tackle the problems in the further education sector.

"We meet on structures and problems of different organisations and suggest solutions. We exchange job descriptions and look at our different ways of doing things. PAs are now being taken seriously and consulted." In addition, she has set up a PA forum for Lewisham College which meets every half-term, and is also looking at the reorganisation of the way the college secretaries work.

Ms Pugh admits that this is the best job she has ever had. But how does she manage to cope with her different areas of work?

"Communication and planning is absolutely vital," she says. "And you

need to encourage ideas and input. Everyone likes to make a contribution and feel valued."

She believes that if you lead from the front and never ask a team member to do a task you wouldn't do yourself, the satisfactions of having a professional, reliable team behind you are plentiful.

She is clearly enthusiastic about the work that the college is doing in training secretaries, and took me round the faculty of business, computing and languages to peep in the computer-filled rooms where it all happens.

"The college is a pioneer in secretarial/IT/personal development skills — there is more to being a secretary than just making the key-boards sing and dance."

Students can choose a course to suit them. They range from a one-year, full-time secretarial course, a one-year advanced secretarial course or an 18-week intensive business/secretarial skills course. Then there is training for legal and medical secretaries, and business administration courses which allow students to gain experience by offering them work and study at the same time.

Dick Palmer, its director, says the

faculty "holds business breakfasts and invites recruitment agencies and employers to talk to the students. We want to respect their need to learn by giving them an environment that respects them."

At 38, Jilly Mbimba-Brown is changing careers. Having taken a degree in Third World development and politics at the Open University, she became a restorer of church buildings and then a Tefl (teaching English as a foreign language) teacher. Now she would like to be a secretary, a receptionist or a translator, making use of the French and German she learnt when she lived in Switzerland. She is in the middle of the 18-week secretarial course at Lewisham which is, she says, everything she hoped for. Shorthand and computer work play a big part.

We get help on finding quality jobs from recruitment agencies, the faculty job shop and newspaper advertisements placed on the noticeboard," she says. "It would be good if we could do more than 10 hours a week, although we can use the computers out of hours."

Needless to say, Ms Pugh is invited to talk to the students. As we walk back across the campus she looks at my scrawly longhand disapprovingly. "I believe that secretaries should always keep up their shorthand. It should be used for taking telephone messages and notes so that it doesn't slip. For the first part of my career I hardly used it, and now I need it all the time."



Top, Sarah Pugh, Principal's PA. Below, trainee Jilly Mbimba-Brown

PAs are now being taken seriously and consulted

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Min. £33,000 in first year

As a pretty high-profile recruitment agency, we're usually first choice supplier to many thousands of employers up and down the country. In 1996, through just 54 UK offices, 39,000 companies spent more than \$85 million with us.

During the next few months, for several reasons including promotions, we shall be seeking 4 new branch managers, 3 of them within the M25 area, and invite applications from proven team leaders of their integrity and ambition.

You'll need to be bright, (though a university degree is no guarantee of success). What matters to us is that you're articulate, that you're hungry for achievement, and that you have personality, leadership skills and courage.

If your qualities seem right to us, we'll teach you our business and you'll join what has been acknowledged as the most formidable and professional management team in our industry. Your earnings will be a minimum of £33,000 in your first year, but think much higher — there is no maximum.

We'll provide the rewards you deserve. Write to: Mrs. JOY ADAMS, Regional Director at Office: Angels, 3 Shortlands, Hammersmith, London, W6 8RR.



Recruitment administrator.

£22,000 + bens

US IT Consultancy requires a proactive and assertive individual to run their recruitment program. You will liaise on an international basis and take control of many varied projects. Coming from an administration or recruitment background you must be able to work under pressure and meet strict deadlines. Skills: 50 wpm typing / Word for Windows. Age: 24-30. Please call Vanessa Mitchell on 0171 390 7000.



PUT YOUR CAREER UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Personal Career Advice for Executive Secretaries



Reed Search is a special service designed to respond to the needs of Executive Secretaries who are establishing an impressive career history and seeking ways in which to capitalise on it. This exceptional service offers you the opportunity to work in partnership with a recruitment specialist dedicated to furthering your career through the provision of a level of commitment unsurpassed by any other recruitment company.

Senior Secretaries To £25,000
Our client currently has an urgent need for several Senior Secretaries with five years' experience at Director level to work within an impressive corporate environment. Candidates must have extensive knowledge of MS Office and be able to work effectively under pressure at all times.
Reed Employment Services 0171 585 8916 408 Strand, London WC2R 0NE

Secretary To £20,000
This high street bank now seeks a senior level secretary to provide secretarial/PA support to the Head of Financial Analysis and Estimating. This position involves arranging diaries, organizing meetings, typing and offers good benefits with the possibility of progression.
Reed Employment Services 0171 481 2881 99 Fincham Road, London EC2M 4BE

PA to Finance/Administration Director £20,000
To provide full PA/secretarial support to the Finance/Administration Director of the drinks company. The role involves typing, mail, travel arrangements and the preparation of reports. Candidates should have excellent communication skills and 2-3 years' senior level experience. Shorthand and MS Office essential. French would be an advantage.
Reed Employment Services 0181 994 0108 408 Chiswick High Road, London W4 8TF

To discover more about this special service and to find out if you qualify, contact any Reed Employment Services branch. Open from 9.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday. For over 1,000 jobs visit the Reed Web site at <http://www.reed.co.uk>



Hays Banking Personnel

SECRETARIAL DIVISION

WINTER WARMERS! £18 - £25,000
Calling all experienced secretaries and administrators. We are currently seeking talented individuals to fill challenging positions within leading international Investment Banks, as well as those with excellent MS Office skills and a keen eye for detail. If you are looking for a challenging role, please contact us for a confidential interview.

TEAM SECRETARIES £18.00 p/hr Ongoing
City/West End/South-East London
We are looking for experienced secretaries with strong Powerskills. West End Windows and Excel for database opportunities within Investment Banking. You should be flexible, have good communication skills and want to work as part of a team for a prestigious international bank. Banking experience and skills typing would be an advantage. If this sounds of interest, please call us for an interview.

CALLING ALL TRADE FLOOR SECRETARIES £18.00 p/hr
Temp/Perm
Long and Short term positions are now available on one of London's largest and busiest Trade Floors. Previous Trade Floor experience is essential, coupled with a 45 wpm typing speed and superb knowledge of Word for Windows. Seeking a confident personality, you will be working under pressure and changing priorities. Competency in Excel and Powerskills plus fluency in foreign languages are a bonus.

CITY SHORTHAND SECRETARY £18.00 p/hr
Temp to Perm
Several short-term secretarial opportunities are now open in a prestigious Investment Bank. Requiring knowledge of Word, Excel and Powerskills, with typing speeds of 55 wpm and Shorthand speeds of 70 wpm. These positions would ideally suit "chat-jobs". You will be enthusiastic and working career progression. Previous banking experience is preferred.

Call 0171 638 7003
11-12 London Wall, London EC2M 4SR
Tel: 0171 638 7003 Fax: 0171 628 5057

ADVERTISING, PUBLISHING, TELEVISION, DESIGN, ENTERTAINMENT, MUSIC, PUBLIC RELATIONS, ARTS, MARKETING, BROADCASTING.

PA TO MD - MEDIA RESEARCH TO £26K

An involved and challenging role for a senior level PA who can demonstrate longevity in their secretarial career, preferably within advertising or marketing, and who has easy access to Hanger Lane.

This role is very organizational and project-based, and therefore needs a professional support who is self-motivated and willing to see their initiative.

PA TO HEAD OF DIVISION £17-20K
Join this fantastic top 3 PA Consultancy and take on responsibilities with client liaison, putting together presentations, arranging VIP meetings and managing the team communications flow.

Experience as a secretary/PA in a fast-paced environment such as PR, Advertising, Design or Marketing is essential. Ability to undertake a heavy work load and communicate effectively with all levels are also desired attributes.

All enquiries to Estelle Bingham
Tel: 0171 292 2900 Fax: 0171 434 0297

PA/SECRETARY to PRESIDENT £27,750 + Benefits (Waterloo)

President of blue chip company is seeking a published, experienced Secretary to manage his diaries and complex commitments. As his Personal Assistant/Secretary you will be involved in his business affairs, charitable work, and the organization of the busy private life. Strong communication and excellent secretarial skills essential 80 shorthand/70 typing.

Tel: 0171-588-3055
Fax: 0171-588-3066
Mitchell Young Associates.

WINE

£19,000 + Benefits.

An exciting opportunity for a PA with an interest in wine. You will be providing secretarial support to the head of this very busy prestigious organization, as well as working as part of the team. The role will involve organising seminars and conferences and ensuring they run smoothly. You will enjoy using your initiative and are able to work without supervision. An excellent telephone manner is essential as is fluency in French. Microsoft Office, Shorthand and Typing 55wpm.

0171-831-1220

RECEPTION SELECTION



SUMMERS & CO.
RECEPTIONIST
£23,000 + exc. benefits
+ 0% - 25% discretionary bonus
International Investment House seeks a dynamic, very experienced and highly motivated professional Receptionist/Secretary. Only the best should apply. Previous solid relevant experience in a similar environment would be an advantage. Hours 8.30 - 5.30. 40 wpm typing. Windows 95. Swissbanked.

Please call 0171 637 3213

BRITISH PROPERTY FEDERATION SECRETARY

Salary £21K plus benefits

The British Property Federation, the trade association for the property industry, needs an experienced and confident Secretary to provide secretarial and administrative support primarily to the Director General and support for one other member of the Management Team.

Applicants must be well organized, with excellent secretarial skills, including email, and at least two years' experience. The successful candidate will be expected to have a good working knowledge of Windows 95 and a knowledge of e-mail and the internet.

An ability to work on own initiative and to communicate effectively is essential and, for a suitably qualified person (very experienced and/or graduate level education), there would be the opportunity to undertake occasional ad hoc research projects in a small staff of two. Flexibility is essential.

Applicants should apply in writing with CV to: Andrea Sinclair, British Property Federation, 35 Catherine Place, London, SW1E 6DT.

(No agencies)
Closing date for applications: Wednesday, 5 November 1997.

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Our lovely client, a small, well-run, family company of 15 people need a charming Personal Assistant to work for a dynamic Director. You should be 25+, have excellent organizational skills, be able to juggle projects and appear calm at all times. Fabulous office and perks. W4W essential.

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PROJECT SECRETARY £22K + BENES

Int. or sales team sec. full involvement in setting project by action, control, initiative. Long-term assignment not necessary. W4W, W4W, W4W, W4W.

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The company: Mayfair based corporate HQ of large financial services company

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The essentials: Secretarial experience within similar environment (ideally) with fast, accurate typing and knowledge of MS Office. Ability to multi-task and fit into the busy environment.

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SECRETARY/OFFICE ASSISTANT c.£16,000

City/Village Company seeks a mature returner to carry out general reception and secretarial duties. The position requires good personal presentation, sound organizational skills and typing/WP. Essential requirement is ability and willingness to work harmoniously in a small team.

Please send your CV with hand written covering letter to:
The Clerk
The Vinters' Company
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Salary £10,000 + commission + bonus + car
Please send your CV to: Lettings London
HARRINGTON LOWMOES
28 New Kings Road, Fulham,
London SW14 6JL
Fax: 0171 731 1101

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Salary £10,000 + commission + bonus + car
Please send your CV to: Lettings London
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28 New Kings Road, Fulham,
London SW14 6JL
Fax: 0171 731 1101

GENERAL ADMIN ASSISTANT

For Property Consultants/Estate Agents at small friendly office in Holland Park. Duties include typing/reception work. Must be computer literate, presentable and able to deal with the general public. Interest in property an advantage as well as clean driving licence.

Salary commensurate with age & experience. Apply in writing to Mrs W. Medd, Jackson-Stops & Staff, 5 Addison Avenue, London W11 4QS.

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City Salary, West-End Job c£30,000

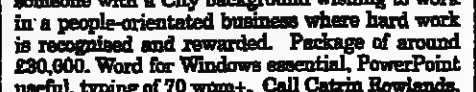
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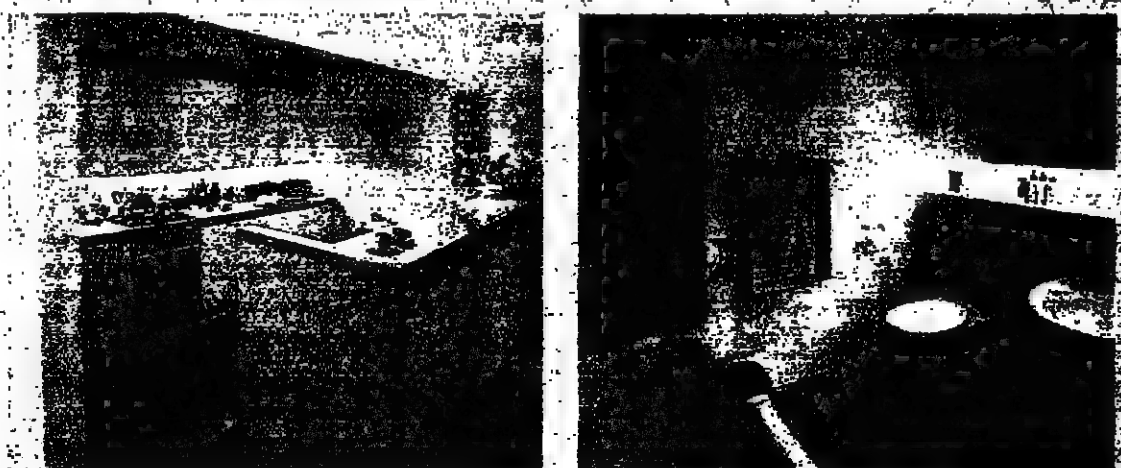
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RACING: BROADCASTER LEAVES AFTER 32 YEARS TO RETURN TO WRITTEN WORD

Wilson parts company with BBC

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

JULIAN WILSON has decided to step down as BBC television's racing correspondent when his contract expires at the end of this year. His departure will come just a month after Sir Peter O'Sullivan completes his final BBC commentary at Newbury — and signals the end of a distinctive era of racing coverage by the corporation.

"I have greatly enjoyed my time with the BBC, but after 32 years I feel the time has come for a change of direction," Wilson, 57, said yesterday. "It

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: BRAMBLES WAY
(5.40 Newcastle)
Next best: ELAKKI
(2.45 Yarmouth)

has been a privilege to be involved in such a fast-moving and revolutionary era in television and the golden age of programme making.

Wilson, who intends to concentrate on racehorse management and renew his journalistic career, added: "It has been an exciting time, but I have a strong desire to return to the world of the written word. The one ever-present colleague has been Sir Peter O'Sullivan. It will be sad to say 'Over to Peter' for the last time."

Significantly, his decision to leave the BBC follows changes in the production, style and content of its racing coverage in recent months. Behind the scenes, Malcolm Kemp was brought in to mastermind the racing output, while in front of camera, Clare Balding and Willie Carson have joined Wilson as regular presenters.



Mr Mulligan, the Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, reappears in the Desert Orchid Chase at Wincanton tomorrow

The changes in personnel and alterations in programme content followed strong criticism a year ago. Racecourses covered by the BBC let it be known they were unhappy with output considered to be dated. Two subsequent polls revealed that three out of four armchair viewers preferred Channel 4's coverage of the sport — and its presenters.

Wilson, very much a traditionalist, has told friends he did not feel totally at ease with some of the modifications, which may have contributed to his decision to step down. It remains to be seen whether the BBC will seek to replace

Wilson, but it is known that senior BBC figures hold John Frayne, the former champion jockey and Channel 4 pundit, in high regard. Less than three months after taking over as chairman of the Toke, Peter Jones gave racing an unpleasant surprise yesterday when he warned the sport not to expect the betting industry to provide extra funding for internationally low levels of prize-money.

As a former president of the Racehorse Owners' Association and founder director of the British Horseracing Board (BHB), Jones was at the forefront of campaigns aimed at

gaining racing a large slice of betting revenue — but he appears to have undergone a dramatic conversion since succeeding Lord Wyndham of Woolton on August 1. "Being needs greater margins, as well as turnover, to develop business," Jones said in Birmingham, where he opened the Bookmakers Show. With his former BHB colleagues and Peter Savill, in particular, apparently in mind, he added: "And the message this sends to certain people is that they don't really understand the investment necessary to keep these shops in business, recognising that

70 per cent of the business is on horse racing. "So if betting shops drop out of business or don't invest in the right way it will be to the ultimate detriment of horse racing. Understandably, the owners want to get more money back into horse racing but it can't look at betting shops and say we can get money out of them. It's just not there and it would be short-sighted if they tried."

The key point of his address was that betting shops must improve their appeal or risk losing customers to other areas of the competitive leisure industry.

NEWCASTLE

THUNDERER
2.00 Low Academy. 2.35 Astrop. 3.05 Knotty Hill.
3.35 Trojan Hero. 4.10 Southern Dominion. 4.40
Katie Komatse. 5.10 Chinoir. 5.40 Lapu-Lapu.
Newmarket Forecast: 2.35 ASTROP (nap).

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW: 5F-7F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST SIS

2.00 EXP MAIDEN STAKES

(2-Y-O; £2,430; 6f) (13 runners)
1 (1) 2546 ANVIL (5) (5) Lincs 5-0 ... P. Eddy 59
2 (2) 2546 ANVIL (5) (5) Lincs 5-0 ... P. Eddy 59
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2.35 ALWICK MAIDEN FILLES STAKES

(2-Y-O; £3,225; 7f) (10)
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3.05 DURANT OF DUNSTABLE HEALTH

WINDMILL WHOLESALE HANDICAP
(£3,550; 6f) (20)
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3.35 MILBURN HEALTH FOODS MISTLETOE RD

CLAIMING HANDICAP (Div 1; £2,346; 1m) (17)
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3.55 MILBURN HEALTH FOODS MISTLETOE RD

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4.10 SEVEN SEAS SLUMBER CUP HANDICAP

(£2,986; 5f) (20)
1 (1) 2546 ANVIL (5) (5) Lincs 5-0 ... P. Eddy 59
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4.40 MATURES STORE CONVERLEAN HANDICAP

(Div 1; £2,430; 1m 2f) (20)
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5.10 MILBURN HEALTH FOODS MISTLETOE RD

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FOOTBALL: DALGLISH'S TEAM STAND ON THE VERGE OF UNLIKELY SUCCESS IN EUROPE

Point could open door for Newcastle

FROM DAVID MADDOCK
IN EINDHOVEN

THE guide book gets straight to the point. "Eindhoven is a peculiar town," its very first sentence suggests of a place dominated by an oppressive concrete skyline. As an opening gambit, at least it is honest.

There is also a peculiarity about the European Champions' League group C. It is peculiar that Newcastle United visit the Dutch city in a far stronger position than their opponents, PSV. Peculiar, too, that Barcelona travel to Kiev requiring victory merely to retain a real interest in the competition.

Quite how Newcastle have got themselves in such a position is most peculiar. Kenny Dalglish, the manager, spoke of a blip on Saturday after his side lost 4-1 away to Leeds United. It is increasingly apparent, though, that a magnificent victory over Barcelona was, in fact, the anomaly.

Dalglish knew back in March, when his side was destroyed by AS Monaco, that he had to build a new defensive foundation at St James' Park and yet now, six months on with the same personnel, similar failings were finally exposed by Leeds. Before Saturday a creaking back four had somehow escaped a complete unmasking, but the second half against Barcelona and the first in Kiev, where they contrived a wholly unlikely draw, hinted at trouble ahead.

Quite how Dalglish has failed to address his central defensive problems is the most peculiar of all. It is notable that only the continued excellence of Shay Given has kept Newcastle on track when goal-keeper is the only position that Dalglish recognised as a problem and subsequently acted incisively.

PSV enter this game under pressure, although Dalglish said yesterday: "They could easily have had six points in the group because they are a very strong side." The fact



Tomasson, right, must fill the boots of Asprilla, pictured celebrating against Barcelona with the Dane. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

remains, however, that they have just one. Dutch football is in a state of flux because it has its own peculiar problems within its domestic league. While the national team has qualified for the World Cup finals as one of the outstanding teams and strong favourites, the club sides are becoming progressively weaker because of a damaging export policy.

The Dutch champions may

just turn out to be an ordinary side. If so, then what appeared the toughest of all the Champions' League groups could open invitingly for Newcastle.

As Jon Dahl Tomasson, Newcastle's Danish forward, suggested yesterday: "If we win in Holland we have a very real prospect of making the last eight." To do so without the goalscoring talents of Alan Shearer or Faustino Asprilla would be a minor miracle.

Asprilla's absence, in particular, will be keenly felt, this evening as the defence, certain to be under intense pressure, looks for a regular outlet.

In the Colombian's absence, it appears that Keith Gillespie and Temur Ketsbala offer the most obvious attacking threat, but Dalglish, always cautious, could be tempted to restrict both to the bench — a mistake should it happen.

PSV have their all-Belgian

forward line of Nills and De Blide restored after injury and suspension, and they will pose a more obvious threat than Tomasson at the other end.

The question is, without the unavailable Pistone — Dalglish's only change to his defence — can Newcastle cope? One could not discover the answer in one of the manager's typically cautious press conferences yesterday. He would not even disclose if

the injured Pistone was actually at the port ready to travel (he was not, as it happens) and, when asked if the Italian had a chance of playing, he replied: "He has a better chance if he travels."

That was the manager's only illuminating quote. Asked whether he thought that a draw would be a good result, he responded: "It's better than a defeat — but not as good as a victory." Quite.

Maldini falls well short of expectations

Next Wednesday, in Moscow, poor Cesare Maldini will be on the rack again, pounding the touchline, exhorting his Italy players. They meet Russia in the first leg of their World Cup play-off and, though having the home leg to come is perceived as an advantage, Russia in Moscow are a hard nut to crack.

Maldini, a kind, decent, genial man, should never have been subjected to such pressures. Second in command to Enzo Bearzot in two World Cups, one of them won, and the successful manager of the national under-21 team, he can hardly know what has hit him.

In retrospect, the win over England at Wembley in February was perhaps the worst thing that could have happened to him, raising expectations and seeming to confirm that, after the sterile years of Arrigo Sacchi, he was the man to make Italian football flow again — no more 4-4-2, with stifling off-side tactics.

Against England in Rome, he bowed to public pressure, put in the inexperienced striker, Inzaghi, and wasted Gianfranco Zola. Maldini insisted: "Gianfranco told me he didn't feel out of position. Inzaghi had a 40-degree temperature. Things fall apart." This time Maldini will have Roberto di Matteo, the Chelsea midfielder, who was suspended in Rome, and will surely deploy Zola up front, with either Christian Vieri or Fabrizio Ravanelli, but

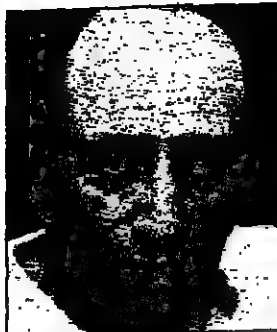
what can he get out of his demoralised team?

All over the football world, the manager is a kind of idol, worshipped when he wins, belaboured when he does not but in Italy it is even more so. Years ago, Berio Guttman, the famous Hungarian manager, twice winner of the European Cup with Benfica, was sacked by Milan. They were leading Serie A but they had just lost consecutive games. "In my next contract," he said bitterly, "I shall have a clause, not to be dismissed when the team is top of the league."

But if not Maldini, then who? The best known managers, Marcello Lippi, of Juventus, Fabio Capello — whatever his present problems at Milan — Gianni Trapattoni, of Bayern Munich, and Nevio Scala, in charge of Borussia Dortmund; either do not want to or cannot accept the poisoned chalice.

Do managers make the

BRIAN GLANVILLE



Overseas View

difference at club as well as international level? It is a moot point, but surely Valeri Lobanovskii has done as is doing so again. "The Colonel" is the man who, in the 1970s, turned Dinamo Kiev and the Soviet side made up solely of its players into a substantial power.

Taking over the Soviet team again on the eve of the World Cup in Mexico in 1986, he drafted in several Kiev players. They routed Hungary in their first game, but were beaten 4-3 by Belgium in the second round. In Italy in 1990, it was hard for him to build on the remnants of the Kiev team, most of whose stars had gone abroad. This he ultimately did himself, only to return last season to Dinamo Kiev and transform a team that has looked

formidable this season in the European Cup Champions' League.

Lobanovskii, who has always evinced a highly scientific approach to football, does not manage the Ukraine team that now meets Croatia in the play-offs. That role is filled by one of his former protégés, Ilia Stabro, once a clever inside forward, who has led his lively young team shrewdly. But most of them are Lobanovskii's men from Dinamo Kiev.

Across the world, in Argentina, Daniel Passarella, the former centre-half and captain of the side, has qualified his team, using a plethora of players, but failing to convince press or public. He swears he will bring back the prolific Gabriel Batistuta, of Fiorentina, for the finals, yet has perversely excluded him from qualifying games. This in a team that, last time out, could not even score at home against Uruguay, who had already been eliminated.

Do managers make the



Maldini knows that Russia provide a difficult obstacle between him and the World Cup finals

Strachan content with Coventry

GORDON STRACHAN has pledged his future to Coventry City after reports that Benfica wanted to appoint him as their coach. "If the media reports are accurate then I am honoured and flattered, but I am not going anywhere," he said yesterday.

"I am more than happy in my job here and I know I have the support of the chairman, directors, players and most of the fans."

Bryan Richardson, the chairman of the FA Carling Premiership club, said that he is already talking with Strachan about a new contract that would confirm him as the manager at Highfield Road beyond 2000.

Strachan, meanwhile, has renewed his attack on the Football Association in the wake of the recent sending-off of Dion Dublin, the Coventry striker, and called for the game's governing body to change its review procedure so

that decisions are made by the organisation's technical director, Howard Wilkinson.

Strachan is angry because the FA refused to rescind Dublin's dismissal against Blackburn Rovers. He said that the decision should be left in the hands of people who had played the game, not the likes of Graham Kelly, the FA chief executive.

He also criticised the lack of help that Dublin has received from the Professional Footballers' Association. "The PFA have sat back and not helped him one bit," Strachan said. "He is a member whose wages are getting reduced because he is not playing and he has lost all kinds of incentives. The PFA have done absolutely nothing. Dion was expecting them to come along and back him but they have not."

"I also need to know that Graham Kelly... does not sit down and watch the video over a cup of tea or a glass of

white wine and decide what constitutes violent conduct that way. People who have not been in the game or near a field should not be making decisions like this. Howard Wilkinson is the FA's technical director. If he was involved, I would find it easier to accept."

Wolverhampton Wanderers have completed the £800,000



Strachan: happy to stay

signing of Dougie Freedman, the Crystal Palace striker. Freedman, who had been initially signed on loan, scored in their 3-1 home win over Swindon Town on Saturday. He is likely to play against Tranmere Rovers in their Nationwide League first division match at Molineux tonight.

Wolves have also completed the £200,000 signing of Kevin Muscat from Palace, with Jamie Smith, the defender valued at £1 million, moving in the opposite direction.

Egil Olsenstad, the Southampton striker, has flown home to Norway to undergo surgery on an ankle injury that will keep him out of action until Christmas.

Mick Jones, the Plymouth Argyle manager, has been charged with misconduct by the FA after alleged comments to David Crick, the referee, during his side's match against Luton Town on October 11.

No change of venue for Chelsea cup-tie

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE Cup Winners' Cup game in Norway tomorrow between Tromso and Chelsea will take place in Tromso or not at all, Chelsea confirmed yesterday. The outbreak of severely winter weather in the town, 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle, had led to suggestions that Rudi Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager, and his team were ready for a last-minute change of venue to Oslo.

But Gwyn Williams, the Chelsea assistant manager, said that there was no question of the game being moved. "If the pitch isn't fit to play, the game will have to be rescheduled for another date," Williams, who saw Tromso lose 4-0 on Sunday, a result that means they must now face a relegation play-off, said.

"They've had ten inches of snow in Tromso and they're

expecting more, although we've been told they'll only call it off if there's more than two feet. There is under-ice heating and a plastic cover over the pitch. We won't really know what condition the pitch is in until they take that off."

"Our motto is that we must be ready to face anything, and we feel we're prepared for whatever the weather throws at us. We're bringing nylons, gloves, woolly hats and thermal underwear, everything we feel we might need."

Chelsea have lost two players to injury over the past week, with Gustavo Poyet ruled out for the season after sustaining a snapped cruciate ligament in training, and Graeme Le Saux injuring an elbow against Leicester City last Saturday.

Dmitri Kharine, the goalkeeper, who has not played first-team football since rupturing cruciate ligaments 13 months ago, has been added to the Chelsea party, while Jody Morris, the young midfielder, is also fit to join the squad of 22.

Gullit has been proclaiming the virtues of the domestic game as his team prepare for further European action. "It is amazing how English football has developed," he said. "Now it has become the role model for all other competitions in the world. The good thing is that English football wanted to change without losing its own identity."

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8/1 2-1 25/1	MAN. UTD. FEYENOORD 40/1	9/1 CRUZ (F)
8/1 3-0 100/1	DRAW MAN. UTD. 4/1	9/1 BERGKAMP (M)
9/1 3-1 80/1	DRAW DRAW 11/2	12/1 VAN GASTEL (F)
40/1 3-2 80/1	FEYENOORD MAN. UTD. 25/1	14/1 MUTT (M)
13/2 0-0 13/2	FEYENOORD DRAW 14/1	25/1 IRWIN (M)
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SAILING 45

Cayard enjoys sweet triumph in Cape Town



United manager fears complacency

Ferguson puts his troops on red alert

By Oliver Holt
Football Correspondent

ALEX FERGUSON caught the whiff of complacency drifting through Old Trafford yesterday. "You lot are the worst for that, I think I'll keep my Scottishness," he told the media as he promised that his Manchester United team would tear into Feyenoord tonight in their next European Cup Champions' League adventure. Then, smiling, he turned to the United official by his side. "Never cast a clout 'til May's out," he muttered.

There may be a perception that now Juventus, the champions of Italy, have been vanquished once, nothing else in the Champions' League matters much until United face them again in the Stadio delle Alpi on December 10, with a probable place in the quarter-finals of the competition at stake. That is a feeling that Ferguson, even in this unusually relaxed mode, was keen to stifle.

To make his point, he promised that United had learnt their lesson from their lacklustre display against the Turkish champions, Fenerbahce, last season, when they surrendered their 40-year unbeaten home record in European football by losing 1-0. Against Feyenoord, he said, the tempo would be just as fierce as it was in the bravura 3-2 win over Juventus.

"I emphasised patience too much to them that night," Ferguson said. "We concentrated too much on making sure we did not lose a goal and it all developed into a languid feel on the pitch and on the terraces. Old Trafford is better when they are up for it, playing with more speed and more penetration. High-tempo stuff."

"We must not fall into the trap of allowing it to become a slow, patient game. We don't



want it to slip to that kind of pace.

"The tempo must be on a high right from the start. It's not a question of going for the throat. You can still be patient, but by the same token you can do it at a high pace. The Juve result is just what we wanted and we mustn't let it slip."

"I think it is fair to say that our best performances this season have been in the Champions' League. It is probably that we have got used to the big games now and the players are focused for them. They realise they can do well in Europe now and there is so much anticipation for the game that their motivation is as high as it is possible to be."

Hooligan conference 2
Wary Dalglish 44
Troubled Maldini 44
Strachan stays 44

"It is natural that they should have more hunger for the Champions' League than domestic football at the moment. I can be tolerant of our form in the Premiership because we are second. I would not want to drop any lower than that. But if we keep in touch until December, I would hope that we can make up ground on the rest later."

In the Champions' League, of course, it is up to the rest to make up ground on United. Feyenoord, who were on the wrong end of a 5-1 mauling from Juventus in Turin in their opening group B match, have had a poor start to their domestic season and are already ten points behind the

leaders, Ajax, in the Dutch league.

On Sunday, with David Connolly, the former Watford striker, making one of his first starts, they lost 2-0 away to lowly Willem II Tilburg. Marc Overmars's former club, and to compound their problems their record signing, the Brazilian, Julio Cruz, is suspended tonight. "There is a cloud hanging above us," Arie Haan, their manager, admitted yesterday. "We are not playing freely."

Ferguson watched Feyenoord's defeat on Sunday but said that he had not detected any lack of confidence in Haan's side. His only worry about his own team concerns the fitness of Henning Berg, who picked up a minor strain in the draw against Derby County.

Given his emphasis on pressing against the Dutch, it is thought that Ferguson may pair Andy Cole with Teddy Sheringham in attack and play Paul Scholes just behind them, with a midfield three of David Beckham, Nicky Butt and Ryan Giggs. If they play to their potential, they should be too competent and skilful for Feyenoord, although if they are awarded a penalty, Dennis Irwin will be entrusted with the responsibility after Sheringham's miss from the spot on Saturday, his second failure in two attempts for United.

"I feel that if we can score in every game in the Champions' League we will go through," Ferguson said. "We have to be aware that we could win every other game in this group and then lose to Juventus and still not go through. That is why that last goal they scored at Old Trafford could cost us. When you get to this level, the concentration has to be absolute. It is all about fractions, the difference between success and failure."

MANCHESTER UNITED (probable 4-3-1-2): P Scholes — G Nwaka, R Johnson, G Pelester, D Irwin — D Beckham, N Butt, R Giggs — P Scholes — E Sheringham, A Cole.

FEYENOORD (probable 4-4-2): J Duijck, S Boering, U van Gobbel, F Paur, P Gini — K van Vondelen, J P van Gastel, P Sanchez, G van Bronckhorst — D Connolly, H Vos.

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Some felt that this caused resentment among the Italian authorities towards the England supporters. David Davies, the FA's director of public affairs, claimed suggestions that they would be censuring Mellor in their report were "misleading in the extreme", adding: "The FA's report is still being completed and conclusions have yet to be reached." Mellor could not comment, but it is understood that he felt he had attempted to prevent trouble by meeting the Italian ambassador before the match.

Sir Bobby Charlton will lead from the front as England's bid to stage the 2006 World Cup steps up a gear. Sir Bobby leaves tomorrow with Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, on an eight-day promotional visit to the United States, Costa Rica and Trinidad and Tobago. Graham Kelly, the FA chief executive, and Alec McGivvan, the campaign chief, complete the four-man delegation, which talk to senior FIFA figures in all three countries.

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Henman concentrates on his backhand during his three-set victory over Haas in Stuttgart yesterday. Photograph: Thomas Kienle

Henman profits from early reprieve

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT
Tennis Correspondent
in Stuttgart

TIM HENMAN advanced to the second round of the Eurocard Open here yesterday by teaching Tommy Haas, his young and talented opponent, that only fools look a gift horse in the mouth. Henman's game may be flawed, but foolish he is not, and an opening-set reprieve, when Haas missed a straight-forward pass at break point, kept the Great Britain No 2 in a contest that he looked certain to lose.

Quite how Henman contrived to win that first set will go down as the biggest mystery of this tournament. His service was as secure as a house of cards against the Haas storm. The third game offered a vignette of Henman's overall performance: in dou-

ble-faulting twice, Henman resisted three break points before redeeming himself with three successive aces. Taken to duce in his next service game, and then ruffled by a fourth break point in the next, it is a wonder that he survived to convert a rare opportunity at 6-5.

He certainly needed it, for Haas, a protégé of the Nick Bollettieri academy in Florida, ran away with the second set. Twice he captured the Henman service, on the first occasion after Henman initiated a sequence of nine consecutive first-service faults. Then, just as Haas looked ready to seize the match, Henman rediscovered his touch to triumph 7-5, 2-6, 6-4 in five minutes short of two hours.

Henman, who later revealed that he was suffering from a throat infection, was pleased to have won. More

than anything else, a player's confidence is governed by the quality of his service. Henman was, therefore, entitled to reflect positively on the outcome, employing the cliché that the glass was half full, not half empty. Although he maintained that to slow down his first service would have been to invite trouble, the fact that he served 12 double faults and

Results 45

conceded 11 break points surely warrants closer examination. He accepted that a similar display today, against Goran Ivanisevic, would not suffice.

Haas, for his part, is destined to make a considerable impact on the game. A finalist in Lyons last week, he is a venomous hitter off both

wings and conceals a vulnerable second service by registering a high percentage of premium deliveries. Haas, 19, has advanced his world ranking 128 places, to No 43, in just six months. If inexperience proved his undoing in this match, then he — along with Nicolas Pietrangeli, the opponent of Greg Rusedski today — should fill some of the void in German tennis left by the departures of Michael Stich and Boris Becker.

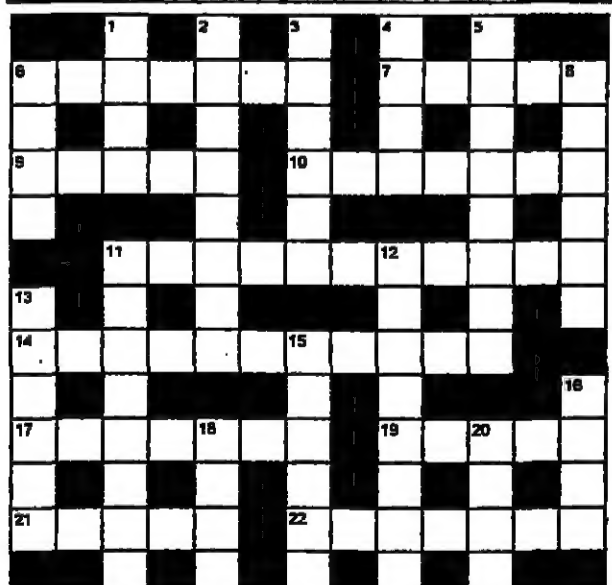
Mind you, Becker, the defending champion here, continues to postpone his exit from the Tour. He opened one of his last important tournaments with a fluent dismissal of his compatriot, Marc-Kevin Goellner, 6-2, 6-4, and today faces Richard Krajicek for a place in the last 16.

While Becker progressed, Pat Cash, now 32, could not replicate his form in quality-

ing for this event. The former Wimbledon champion has long since been blighted by injury and was rudely dismissed by Andrei Medvedev for the gain of just two games. Felix Mantilla, the first of 16 seeds to take to the court yesterday, was the first to be beaten. The Spaniard, seeded No 14, went down in straight sets to the local qualifier, David Prinosil. And Fabrice Santoro, who won his first Tour title when beating Haas in Lyons on Sunday, delivered an equally emphatic verdict over Mark Philippoussis.

The tournament steps up a gear today when all the remaining seeds are due on court. Although Rusedski and Henman represent British interests, the choice is surely that, between Becker and Krajicek. These two former Wimbledon champions could easily contrive fireworks.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1231

- ACROSS
6 Highland farm tenant (7)
7 Delivery circuit; pub order (5)
9 Minister's house (5)
10 Awkward, bony (7)
11 Reach crisis point (4,2,1,4)
14 Fearsomely off-putting (11)
17 Hide boat (7)
19 The 11 down of twenty-seven (5)
21 Single-master; small warship (force) (5)
22 Decorative counter-melody (7)
- DOWN
1 Continue (2,2); 1950s radio show (4)
2 Narrow flag; thrown ribbon (8)
3 Straying; wandering (knight) (6)
4 Lug; sort of hunt (4)
5 Centre of target (5-3)
6 Serious unconscious state (4)
8 Make fun of (6)
11 Inverse third power (maths) (4,4)
12 Crucial trial (4,4)
13 Summary (of text) (6)
15 List of things to do (6)
16 Enclosed, confined (4)
18 Manager; priestly vestment (4)
20 Enlarge (hole); twenty quires (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1230
ACROSS: 1 Subject 2 Canna 8 Antic 9 Ulysses 10 Like a shot 12 Owl 13 Canute 14 Bangle 17 Arc 18 Out of date 20 Felicit 21 Bonus 23 Realist 24 Theatre
DOWN: 1 Shaw 2 Bit 3 Enchant 4 Taught 5 Crypt 6 Nostalgia 7 Absolve 11 King cobra 13 Chandler 15 Affable 16 Ailist 18 Opium 19 Ensur 22 Nut

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Mellor is in clear over Rome affair

By Our Sports Staff

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Clubs deny talk of breakaway

By Mark Souster

SENIOR rugby clubs yesterday denied that a multi-million-pound breakaway from the Rugby Football Union (RFU) was being considered.

Donald Kerr, the chairman of English Rugby Partnership (ERP), which represents the interests of the 24 teams in the Allied Dunbar Premiership, said that the prospect of a split had not been discussed. He insisted that there was a new spirit of co-operation among all parties in the game and that reports of a £20 million investment by Benfield, a leading reinsurance company, or a subsidiary, were untrue.

However, a source close to one leading club reiterated yesterday: "A few weeks ago Richmond officials admitted they had had talks about an improved structure to the season were discussed and agreed in principle. There was no recommendation for a breakaway." Bath said that Andrew Brown's word, their owner, had not attended the meeting.

Last weekend Ashley Levett, the owner of Richmond, did not rule out the possibility of a breakaway if progress was not made on a more flexible

fixture structure, which Chris Wright (chairman of Loftus Road plc, the club's holding company) and I attended, proposals for an improved structure to the season were discussed and agreed in principle. There was no recommendation for a breakaway." Bath said that Andrew Brown's word, their owner, had not attended the meeting.



Wray: wants flexibility

fixture structure, which would allow clubs to increase their cashflow, which is a demand that Nigel Wray, the owner of Saracens, has also voiced. And it is known that Benfield Sports International, a subsidiary of Benfield, is looking at opportunities to become involved in rugby union and sport in general. It specialises in maximising revenue for clubs, but a spokesman reiterated that it could not comment on any of its business activities.

Llanelli put All Blacks before cup

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

LLANELLI are ready to withdraw from the Heineken Cup rather than jeopardise their fixture on November 8 with New Zealand, the opening match of the All Blacks' tour. The Welsh side meet Cardiff in a cup play-off on November 1, with the winner due to play Bath in the quarter-finals the next weekend.

It is a potential clash that adds weight to the arguments of those seeking an overhaul of the British season. "If it came to the crunch and both fixtures were planned on the same day, I have no doubt that we would withdraw from Europe," Ron Jones, Llanelli's chairman, said yesterday.

Bath have offered to move the match back by 48 hours, but Jones said that his players would not be able to do justice to both fixtures. "Playing the All Blacks is more important to us, even though the possibility of a Heineken Cup semi-final would be an attractive proposition," he said. "There is an element of tradition involved here."

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